Play-Integrated Learning Approach as Determinants of Kindergarten Learner's Creativity, Motivation and Social Skills

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Abstract*: Playintegrated learning approach was examined in this study as an instructional framework that intentionally embeds play into daily kindergarten activities to support holistic early childhood development, focusing on public elementary schools in CAMAG Districts during S.Y. 2025–2026. The research aimed to describe how this approach was implemented in the classroom and to determine its influence on kindergarten learners' creativity, motivation, and social skills, with specific objectives that included profiling 96 kindergarten teachers and 180 parents who are randomly selected in terms of age, sex, educational attainment, teaching position, length of service, and training hours, mapping the extent of implementation across six domains—imagination and creativity, cognitive growth, emotional and behavioral benefits, literacy improvement, greater independence, and physical fitness—measuring the level of learners' creativity, motivation, and social skills, and analyzing whether the extent of implementation significantly predicted these outcomes, ultimately generating an action plan to strengthen play integrated practices. Using a descriptive correlational design and an adapted fivepart survey instrument analyzed through weighted mean, correlation, and regression, the study revealed that teachers and parents were predominantly young, well educated, and experienced, and that play integrated learning was implemented at a Very High level across all six domains, with Very High perceived levels of creativity, motivation, and social skills, all of which were significantly and positively predicted by the approach. The findings underscore the importance of embedding purposeful, structured play in kindergarten instruction and recommend that teachers design explicit play based activities that connect to real life routines and higher order thinking, that school heads institutionalize play integrated learning through training and classroom support, that DepEd offices align curriculum and standards with playbased strategies, that LRMDS and other units provide standardized play resources, that local government and community stakeholders extend play beyond the classroom, that parents replicate play integrated routines at home, and that future researchers conduct longitudinal and comparative studies to further validate and refine the impact of play integrated learning on early childhood outcomes. In accordance with the study, kindergarten students' creativity, motivation, and social skills are greatly enhanced by play-integrated learning in public primary schools in Bohol's 3rd Congressional District. The results show benefits in every category, indicating that improving this strategy can improve important early development outcomes.

***Keywords*: Creativity, kindergarten education, motivation, play-integrated learning, social skills.**

1. Introduction

A. Rationale

Early childhood education plays a critical role in developing key learner competencies such as creativity, motivation, and social skills. Many elementary learners face challenges in exhibiting adequate levels of creativity and social interaction, and sustained motivation in the classroom remains a concern for educators (Parwoto et al., 2024). Low levels of creativity and motivation among young learners are widely documented, with studies noting their negative effects on academic engagement and social development (Tayaban, 2025). In addition, difficulties in social skills have been linked to increased behavioral problems and reduced peer interactions, which can affect overall learning experiences (Burchinal et al., 2023). These persistent issues highlight the urgent need for effective interventions to support early childhood development.

Adverse effects on learners' academic and personal growth often stem from low creativity, motivation, and social skills. Reduced motivation can result in lack of engagement, poor academic performance, and behavioral problems (Singh et al., 2022). Additionally, limited creativity and social skill development can impair problem-solving abilities and reduce opportunities for collaborative learning, which are important factors for success in later educational stages (Hsia et al., 2021). Such outcomes highlight the need for effective instructional approaches tailored to young learners.

Play-integrated or play-based learning has emerged as an effective pedagogical strategy to resolve these developmental challenges. It encourages imagination, cognitive growth, and emotional well-being by fostering active exploration and social interaction within meaningful contexts (Gica et al., 2025). Evidence shows that play-based learning enhances children's intrinsic motivation by making learning enjoyable and relevant to their interests (Anderson, & Thomas, 2021). Moreover, integrating play into classroom instruction promotes social skills through cooperative activities and group problem-solving

(Khasanova, 2025).

Gaps remain in understanding how widely play-integrated learning is implemented and its direct impact on learners' creativity, motivation, and social skills. Factors like teacher profiles and training are often overlooked. This study examines its implementation and effects while proposing strategies for improvement. This study provides valuable insights for early childhood education.

Evidence on play-integrated learning can help educators and policymakers improve learning environments and design interventions that enhance creativity, motivation, and social skills in young learners.

B. Literature Background

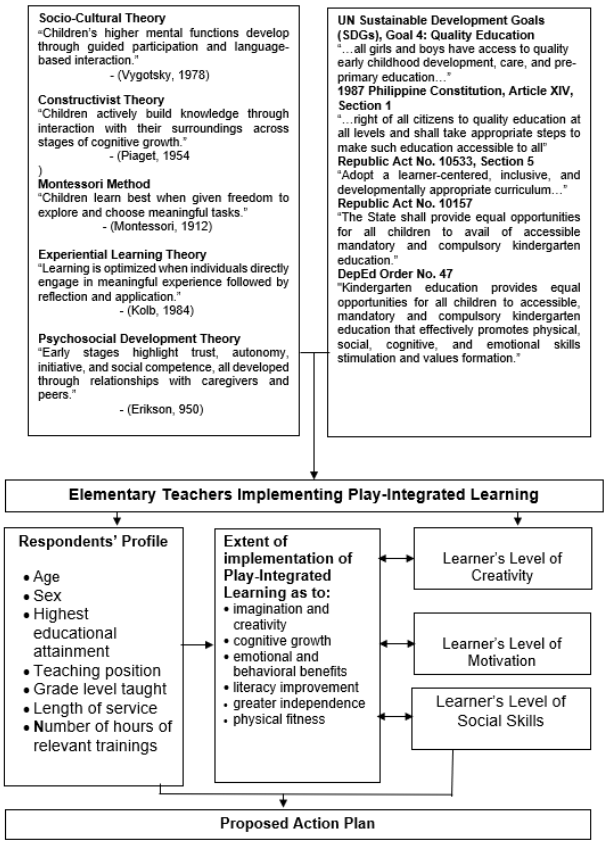

Fig. 1. Theoretical and conceptual framework

Play-integrated learning approach is an educational method that places play at the center of the learning process. It recognizes that children learn most effectively when engaged in joyous, meaningful, and exploratory activities that allow them to develop holistically (Randhawa, 2023). This approach combines child-directed play with teacher facilitation, encouraging learners to explore, experiment, and construct understanding in a supportive environment. Through play, learners acquire essential skills such as critical thinking, creativity, and social interaction, while simultaneously nurturing cognitive, emotional, and physical growth (Dardovski, 2024). The celebratory and active nature of play makes learning authentic, motivating, and accessible to diverse learners.

Moreover, play-integrated learning operates on the principle that play is an intrinsic human activity that fosters natural curiosity and discovery. It emphasizes the balance between freedom and intentional guidance, where educators scaffold learning objectives within play contexts without dominating the experience. This approach shifts the teacher's role from director to facilitator, nurturing learner autonomy while ensuring curriculum goals are attained (Iki, 2025). Play-integrated learning provides a flexible, individualized pathway for learners to master competencies in a manner aligned with their developmental needs and interests promoting engagement and lifelong learning disposition (Valendez et al., 2025).

Self-directed play, a vital element of this approach, refers to play activities initiated and controlled by the child. It allows children to follow their interests, make choices, and regulate their actions in an open-ended environment (Havenga et al., 2023). This autonomy boosts learners' confidence, fosters intrinsic motivation, and empowers them to take responsibility for their learning trajectory. Self-directed play nurtures creativity as children invent scenarios and solve problems without predefined outcomes, supporting personalized cognitive and social growth.

Enjoyment and engagement are fundamental to play-integrated learning because they create a positive emotional climate conducive to exploration and sustained attention (Rizwan et al., 2025). When learners find joy in activities, their willingness to participate deeply increases, leading to improved retention and application of knowledge. Yang & Wang (2022) stress that enjoyable learning experiences reduce anxiety and promote resilience, thereby enhancing both motivation and the quality of learning outcomes.

Imagination and creativity emerge naturally within play contexts, providing learners with opportunities to envision possibilities beyond immediate reality. Play encourages divergent thinking, innovation, and flexible problem-solving skills by allowing children to experiment with roles, objects, and ideas creatively (Fleer, 2021). This nurtures a mindset open to exploration and invention, which is critical for adapting to complex challenges in learning and life.

Social interaction and collaboration are promoted through shared play experiences where learners communicate, negotiate, and cooperate. These social processes teach important interpersonal skills such as empathy, turn-taking, conflict resolution, and joint attention (Huseynli, 2024). Collaborative play also enables language development and cultural learning, fostering a sense of community and belonging essential for social competence (Kivinen et al., 2025).

Iterative and process-oriented learning characterizes play-integrated learning by emphasizing repeated engagement and reflection. Learners cycle through experimenting, observing, adjusting, and refining their actions, deepening understanding over time. This iterative process develops metacognitive skills and adaptability, encouraging learners to embrace challenges as opportunities for growth rather than failure (Sando, 2021).

The role of play in cognitive development is profound as it offers concrete, hands-on experiences that facilitate concept formation, memory retention, and problem-solving abilities. Play environments stimulate curiosity and reasoning, helping learners to construct knowledge actively and meaningfully (Agustini et al, 2024). Cognitively, play supports executive functions like attention control, planning, and flexible thinking, which are foundations for academic success (Etokabeka, 2024).

Socially, play fosters essential interpersonal skills by requiring communication, cooperation, and shared goal-setting (Niu et al., 2025). These interactions build emotional intelligence and social norms understanding, crucial for positive relationships. Through guided and peer interactions in play, children learn to negotiate roles, regulate emotions, and develop empathy, skills beneficial for both classroom and life contexts.

Emotionally, play offers safe spaces for expression, regulation, and exploration of feelings. It supports well-being by reducing stress and building confidence, allowing learners to experiment with identity and social roles in a nurturing setting (Moore, 2021). Such emotional growth underpins motivation and engagement, contributing to positive attitudes toward learning.

Implementation of play-integrated learning in classrooms involves creating environments rich in varied materials and opportunities for both free and guided play. Teachers structure spaces and schedules to balance child autonomy and instructional goals. They observe and scaffold learner activities to ensure educational objectives are met while preserving the exploratory spirit of play (Arda Tuncdemir, 2025).

Classroom implementation also demands professional preparation of educators to facilitate play effectively. Teachers must be skilled in integrating curricular content into play contexts, recognizing teachable moments, and fostering inclusive, supportive atmospheres (Kangas et al., 2023). Parental and community involvement further enriches the learning environment and sustains play as a valued pedagogical practice (Muyangali, 2025).

Benefits of play-integrated learning in early childhood and primary education are extensive. It supports comprehensive development by addressing cognitive, social, emotional, and physical domains simultaneously, leading to well-rounded learners equipped for future challenges (Khotele, 2024). Play builds foundational skills such as language, motor coordination, creativity, and problem-solving, which are pivotal for academic readiness and lifelong learning (Singh, 2023).

Additionally, play integration fosters positive attitudes toward school, enhances motivation, and reduces behavioral issues by making learning joyful and meaningful. It accommodates diverse learning styles and paces, promoting equity and inclusion. Overall, play-integrated learning cultivates learners' holistic growth, empowering them to thrive academically, socially, and personally (Ramzan et al., 2023).

Creativity in childhood development refers to the ability of children to generate novel ideas, express themselves uniquely, and explore possibilities beyond the conventional. It involves divergent thinking, imaginative play, and problem solving, all of which contribute to a child's overall growth and learning capacity (Hod-Shemer, 2024). Creativity is not simply about artistic expression but encompasses thinking flexibly, adapting to new situations, and finding innovative solutions (Zare Rameshti, 2025). Importantly, creativity nurtures self-confidence and emotional expression, enabling children to communicate their understanding and perspective of the world.

Yildirim and Yilmaz (2023) present three dimensions of creativity that manifest differently in children. One dimension is imaginative creativity, where children engage in pretend play, storytelling, and role-playing to explore various scenarios and ideas. Another dimension involves artistic creativity, expressed through drawing, painting, music, and other art forms, which develops motor skills and emotional communication. A third dimension is problem-solving creativity, characterized by finding multiple solutions to challenges and applying critical thinking in diverse contexts. These types interplay to facilitate holistic creative development by encouraging children to experiment, innovate, and connect ideas across disciplines.

Additionally, creativity in children can be viewed through cognitive, emotional, and social lenses. Cognitively, creativity encompasses skills like flexible thinking, curiosity, and the ability to synthesize information in novel ways (Ellerton & Kelly, 2022). Emotionally, it supports self-expression, helps in coping with feelings, and builds motivation through engaging activities (Jean-Berluche, 2024). Social creativity arises when children collaborate, share ideas, and negotiate new meanings within group contexts (Nasi, 2024). These dimensions highlight that creativity is multifaceted and essential for adaptive functioning in learning and life.

Indicators and manifestations of creativity in learners are diverse and often observable in behaviors and outputs. Children showing creativity may demonstrate curiosity by asking questions and showing interest in exploring new ideas (Evans, and Jirout, 2023). They engage in symbolic play, inventing scenarios where everyday objects serve new purposes, showing flexibility in thought. Creative learners often exhibit persistence when tackling challenges, seeking alternative methods rather than giving up.

Furthermore, children express creativity through verbal and non-verbal communication, such as storytelling, drawing, building, or music-making (Polok et al., 2022). Their work might show originality, humor, or unexpected perspectives. They often take risks in thought and action, experimenting beyond what is familiar. Such indicators reflect a readiness to innovate and adapt—key aspects of creative competence.

Creativity also manifests in problem-solving tasks when learners come up with multiple solutions or use resources inventively (Adeoye & Jimoh, 2023). This flexibility indicates divergent thinking, an important cognitive attribute of creativity. Observing children's play and work offers rich insight into these manifestations, informing educators about

their developmental progress and potential.

Smare and Elfatihi (2024) present several factors influence creativity development in children. Environmental factors include exposure to rich, stimulating materials and opportunities for open-ended play, which allow freedom to experiment and express ideas. Social interactions with peers and adults providing encouragement and positive feedback further nurture creativity by creating a safe space for exploration. A supportive and non-judgmental environment encourages risk-taking, a necessary element of creative growth.

Individual factors such as temperament, motivation, and prior experiences also shape creativity. Children with an intrinsic curiosity and high engagement tend to explore more deeply, enhancing creative outcomes (Li et al., 2023). Access to diverse experiences broadens perspectives and fosters innovative thinking. Understanding these factors enables educators to design effective strategies to cultivate creativity in learners.

Play and experiential learning play pivotal roles in enhancing creativity by providing active, meaningful contexts where learners experiment, simulate real-life situations, and solve problems. Through hands-on, playful experiences, children engage their senses and cognition, promoting deeper understanding and innovative thinking. These approaches also foster motivation and confidence as learners take ownership of their discoveries.

Creativity as a cognitive and social process involves both mental flexibility and interpersonal interaction. Cognitively, creative thinking requires divergent thinking, pattern recognition, and synthesis of new ideas—a process nurtured through exploratory learning and reflection. Socially, creativity develops through collaboration, where exchanging ideas with others stimulates novel perspectives and co-creation (Fuchs et al., 2023). This dynamic interplay emphasizes that creativity flourishes when children are both intellectually challenged and socially supported.

Moreover, the communal aspect of creativity enhances motivation and engagement by providing feedback, encouragement, and shared meaning-making. Group play and cooperative projects help learners develop empathy and communication skills, integral to creative collaboration (Valquaresma, 2024). Thus, creativity is not only an individual capacity but also a socially constructed ability fostered within interactive learning environments.

Motivation in educational settings is a multifaceted concept that drives learners to initiate, sustain, and direct their learning behaviors. At its core, motivation reflects the internal and external forces that stimulate a learner's interest and persistence in engaging with tasks or challenges. It involves not only the desire to achieve specific outcomes but also the readiness to invest effort and overcome obstacles (Nabiev, 2025). Understanding motivation is crucial for educators to create learning environments that foster engagement, enthusiasm, and a positive attitude toward knowledge acquisition and skill development.

Moreover, motivation is dynamic and influenced by the context and individual learner differences. It integrates cognitive, emotional, and social dimensions, affecting how learners perceive tasks, their sense of self-efficacy, and their ultimate performance (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2021). Educators seek to understand motivation's role in shaping learners' attention, memory, and goal-setting processes. Effective motivation enhances not only academic achievement but also the development of lifelong learning dispositions. Recognizing motivational patterns helps in tailoring instructional strategies that support sustained engagement and meaningful learning.

Intrinsic motivation arises from within the learner, driven by inherent interest, curiosity, satisfaction, or personal meaning found in the activity. Learners engaging intrinsically perform tasks for enjoyment and mastery rather than for external rewards. Conversely, extrinsic motivation depends on external factors such as rewards, recognition, grades, or avoidance of punishment. While extrinsic motivators can be effective for task initiation or compliance, they may undermine intrinsic interest if overly relied upon (Morris et al., 2022). Balancing both types ensures learners remain engaged while developing deeper conceptual understanding and self-regulated learning habits.

Motivation plays a pivotal role in learning engagement and academic performance as it influences the intensity and persistence of students' efforts. Highly motivated learners are more likely to concentrate, embrace challenges, and employ effective learning strategies (Adhikari et al., 2023). Engagement fueled by motivation enhances cognitive processing, leading to better comprehension, retention, and transfer of knowledge. Furthermore, motivation fosters resilience, enabling learners to overcome difficulties and maintain a positive attitude toward schooling (Wang & Liu, 2022).

Academic performance is closely linked to motivational levels; learners who find learning meaningful and satisfying tend to achieve higher (Bai et al., 2021). Motivation not only drives initial participation but also sustains long-term commitment to learning goals. Teachers who cultivate motivational climates positively impact student achievement by fostering autonomy, competence, and relatedness. This encouragement supports students' desire to excel academically and equips them with skills for self-directed learning.

Emotional aspects of motivation include feelings of interest, enjoyment, and value placed on learning activities (Reeve, 2024). Positive emotions enhance motivation by increasing engagement and openness to new experiences. Motivation also involves emotional regulation, as learners must manage frustration and anxiety when faced with challenges. Cognitive aspects encompass beliefs about one's abilities, expectations of success, and goal orientation, which influence motivation intensity and direction (Urhahne & Wijnia, 2023).

Additionally, motivation integrates affective and cognitive components in a reciprocal cycle; emotions shape thoughts about learning tasks, while cognitive appraisals influence emotional responses (Dahlqvist, 2023). Recognizing this

interplay helps educators design experiences that foster positive affect and confidence, thus sustaining motivation. Understanding emotional and cognitive factors enables targeted interventions to improve learner persistence and achievement.

Motivational strategies in play-based learning environments include offering choice and autonomy, providing meaningful and challenging tasks, and creating a supportive atmosphere where effort is acknowledged (Lovell, 2025). Such strategies encourage intrinsic motivation by aligning activities with learner interests and providing opportunities for mastery. Play-based settings stimulate curiosity and creativity, making learning enjoyable and intrinsically rewarding.

Furthermore, scaffolding and positive feedback during play guide learners toward achievable goals, reinforcing competence and motivation (Ahmed et al., 2022). Collaborative play enhances social motivation through peer encouragement and shared achievement. Integrating motivational principles in play-based learning ensures that learners remain engaged, confident, and invested in their progress.

Motivation significantly impacts learners' persistence and goal achievement by sustaining effort over time and influencing self-regulatory behaviors. Motivated learners are more likely to set realistic goals, monitor progress, and adjust strategies when obstacles arise (Borkowski & Thorpe, 2023). Persistence driven by motivation leads to higher completion rates and deeper learning outcomes.

Moreover, motivation affects learners' resilience, enabling them to cope with setbacks and maintain focus on long-term objectives. Educators who support motivation foster a growth mindset where challenges are seen as opportunities for development. Consequently, motivated learners achieve both immediate academic goals and cultivate habits critical for lifelong success (Oprea, 2024).

Social skills in children encompass a broad set of learned behaviors and competencies that enable effective and appropriate interaction with others. These skills include the abilities to initiate and maintain conversations, interpret social cues, and respond to different social contexts with understanding and cooperation (Del Prette and Del Prette, 2021). Developing social skills is crucial in childhood because it lays the foundation for healthy relationships, emotional regulation, and successful navigation of social environments throughout life. Social skills arise through continuous interactions within family, school, and peer groups and reflect a child's growing capacity for communication, empathy, cooperation, and conflict resolution (Xovoxon, 2024).

Furthermore, social skills represent not only communication abilities but also a complex integration of emotional and behavioral regulation, problem-solving, and perspective-taking (Çoban et al., 2022). These competencies enable children to develop meaningful social connections and adapt to evolving social expectations. Children who master social skills are better equipped to manage emotions, reduce behavioral problems, and engage positively in academic and social settings (Silveira-Zaldivar et al., 2021). Early development of these skills is essential for fostering resilience and promoting well-being in both childhood and adulthood.

Communication forms the cornerstone of social skills, involving both sending and receiving messages effectively through verbal and non-verbal means (Ali, 2024). Children learn to articulate thoughts clearly, listen attentively, and interpret body language and expressions, which facilitates understanding and prevents conflicts (Zaripour, 2024). Effective communication is fundamental to building friendships, participating in collaborative tasks, and expressing needs or emotions appropriately (Fatih et al., 2025).

Cooperation is another critical component that teaches children to work jointly with others toward shared objectives. It involves sharing resources, negotiating roles, following rules, and displaying flexibility (Gerber et al., 2024). Developing cooperation during play or group learning helps children appreciate teamwork and mutual respect, fostering a sense of belonging and collective responsibility.

Empathy, the ability to understand and resonate with others' emotions, is essential for building compassionate and supportive relationships (Valenzuela, 2025). Children with developed empathy show concern, kindness, and responsiveness to peers, which enhances social harmony and conflict prevention (Sultan and Khan, 2025). Empathy nurtures prosocial behaviors that contribute positively to social environments both in and outside the classroom.

Conflict resolution equips children with skills to handle disagreements constructively by promoting effective communication, problem-solving, and emotional regulation (Ilie, 2023). Learning these skills reduces incidences of aggressive or disruptive behavior and helps maintain peaceful interactions. Mastery of conflict resolution empowers children to resolve misunderstandings and build cooperative relationships in diverse social settings.

Social development plays a vital role in learning environments by fostering the social and emotional competencies necessary for academic success and personal well-being. Supportive environments that encourage positive social interactions contribute to increased engagement, motivation, and a safe space for learning. Socially skilled children tend to follow classroom norms better, participate actively in group activities, and build friendships that support emotional and cognitive growth (Baker, 2023).

Additionally, social development in schools promotes inclusivity and mutual respect among diverse learners, reducing bullying and fostering a culture of acceptance. Healthy social relationships enhance students' self-esteem and reduce anxiety, contributing to improved academic and behavioral outcomes. Schools that prioritize social development are better positioned to address learners' holistic needs and prepare them for life beyond academics (Ayeras et al., 2024).

Play and group activities serve as natural contexts for social skill development by offering settings where children practice interaction, negotiation, cooperation, and empathy. Shared activities necessitate communication, perspective-taking, and

joint decision-making, all essential social skills. Play also allows children to experiment with social roles and rules in a low-stress, enjoyable environment, reinforcing social learning (Sohrabi, 2021).

Moreover, group activities develop social confidence and adaptability by exposing children to different personalities, ideas, and group dynamics. Collaborative learning experiences promote teamwork, respect for others' opinions, and conflict management (Pham, 2024). These experiences prepare children to thrive in varied social situations inside and outside school.

Social skills are reliable predictors of academic and life success because they underpin effective communication, collaboration, and emotional regulation. Children with strong social skills generally achieve higher academically due to better classroom behavior, engagement, and relationships with teachers and peers (Hajovsky et al., 2024). Social competence contributes to positive learning experiences that reinforce motivation and achievement.

Furthermore, social skills acquired in childhood have lasting impacts on career success, mental health, and social relationships. Individuals with well-developed social competencies navigate workplace interactions, lead teams, and foster community engagement effectively (Demirdis, 2025). These lifelong benefits highlight the critical importance of cultivating social skills early in education for comprehensive development.

Play-integrated learning has garnered significant attention as a promising pedagogical approach that holistically fosters learners' creativity, motivation, and social skills through active engagement and meaningful exploration. Aligning with this paradigm, several empirical studies have examined various facets of play-based learning's effectiveness and challenges in different educational contexts. These studies provide valuable insights into how play fosters developmental outcomes, identifies barriers to implementation, and offers recommendations for enhancing early childhood and primary education programs. The following discussion summarizes key related studies that inform and guide the objectives of the present study.

Chukwudi Ekeh (2023) investigated the role of play-based pedagogy in enhancing creativity among early-grade and preschool learners in Owerri Education Zone, Nigeria, using a qualitative Participatory Action Research design. The study involved nine purposively sampled teachers and utilized semi-structured interviews and observational schedules to collect data. Findings showed a limited teacher understanding of contemporary play-based pedagogies but confirmed the positive impact of professional development programs on fostering learners' creativity. The study concluded with a recommendation for comprehensive teacher training to better integrate 21st-century play-based strategies into early education.

Similarly, Florita and Sabud (2025) explored kindergarten teachers' experiences with play-based learning in Magsaysay, Davao del Sur through a qualitative-phenomenological approach involving twelve Early Childhood Education teachers. The objective was to understand the challenges, strategies, and effects of play-based learning implementation. Results highlighted enhanced student engagement, emotional expression, and knowledge retention, despite challenges such as time management, classroom discipline, and resource scarcity. To mitigate these issues, teachers employed differentiation, clear classroom rules, and parental involvement. The study underscored the need for stronger institutional support, resources, and family engagement to ensure sustained effectiveness of play-based methodologies.

Moreover, Celedonio (2025) examined the cognitive, social, and emotional impact of integrating play-based learning into the MATATAG kindergarten curriculum at Alpha Christian School in Baybay City through a quasi-experimental design. Forty kindergarten learners were assessed pre- and post-intervention using the ECCD tool over four weeks. The results demonstrated significant improvement in learners' academic performance and participation, illustrating the efficacy of play-based learning in nurturing motivation, critical thinking, and engagement. Recommendations included embedding play-based approaches more deeply within the curriculum to elevate early childhood education standards.

Furthermore, Sulaimon et al. (2025) focused on the relationship between play-based learning, teacher satisfaction, stress, and learner collaboration among 200 early childhood practitioners in Ilorin South, Nigeria through a descriptive survey. Utilizing a validated questionnaire with strong reliability, the study found that play methodologies enhanced teacher enjoyment and reduced stress, while fostering inclusive and cooperative classroom dynamics and advancing key developmental domains in children. Key recommendations stressed professional development, parental awareness of home play, and training for educator well-being support.

In addition, Gica et al. (2025) studied the impact of play-based strategies on the social and cognitive growth of preschool children in public schools of Danao City. Using a descriptive-correlational design with 40 purposively selected teachers, the study employed validated observational measures of instructional and child development indicators. Findings revealed frequent use of creative and social interaction-based play strategies correlating with gains in language, reasoning, emotional intelligence, and cooperation. Challenges included teacher generational gaps and parental absence, leading to recommendations for initiatives that strengthen teacher skills, foster home-school links, and enhance communication and progress monitoring.

Gebremariam and Darge (2025) assessed kindergarten teachers' knowledge, perception, motivation, and parental beliefs regarding play-based teaching in Bahir Dar city, Ethiopia using a descriptive survey with 205 participants. Findings highlighted low scores in these areas, which significantly hindered play-based teaching implementation. The study emphasized that improvements in teacher-related factors could lead to greater adoption of play strategies.

Consequently, it called for intensive professional development programs focused on raising awareness and motivation among educators.

Despite positive insights, these studies reveal gaps needing attention: small sample sizes limiting generalizability, unaddressed systemic barriers such as insufficient resources and parental involvement, and limited exploration of long-term child outcomes. These gaps justify the necessity of the present study aimed at comprehensively assessing the influence of play-integrated learning on creativity, motivation, and social skills while proposing contextually relevant strategies to facilitate effective early childhood education practices.

Play-based learning is an educational approach that integrates play as a central and intentional component of the learning process. It recognizes that children learn best when they actively engage in meaningful, enjoyable, and imaginative play experiences that stimulate their curiosity and creativity. This approach not only fosters academic skills but also enhances social, emotional, and cognitive development by providing a supportive environment where children explore, experiment, and interact with others. This study on the influence of play-integrated learning on learners' creativity, motivation, and social skills is anchored in five key theories: Socio-Cultural Theory by Lev Vygotsky (1978), Constructivist Theory by Jean Piaget (1954), Montessori Method by Maria Montessori (1912), Experiential Learning Theory by David Kolb (1984), and Erikson's Psychosocial Development Theory by Erik Erikson (1950).

Lev Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, published in 1978, centers on cognitive development as a socially mediated process where children learn through interaction within their cultural context. Key components such as the Zone of Proximal Development and scaffolding emphasize that children's higher mental functions develop through guided participation and language-based interaction (Scott & Palincsar, 2013). Anchoring the study, this perspective situates play-integrated learning as a social activity where creativity, motivation, and social skillsemerge through supportive interaction with peers and adults.

Furthermore, creativity arises as learners collaborate and co-construct knowledge during play, pushing their cognitive boundaries in a socially enriched environment. Motivation is heightened by meaningful engagement and positive reinforcement within this cultural context. Social skills develop naturally during social interaction and communication in play, reflecting the theory's emphasis on social origin of cognition. These elements underpin the importance of social learning conditions highlighted in the study.

Thus, play-integrated learning aligns with Vygotsky's view that meaningful learning happens through social interaction and cultural tools. Play serves as a rich site for developing creativity by encouraging imaginative social roles, sustaining motivation through interactional support, and enhancing social skills through collaborative challenges. Hence, educational practices grounded in this theory generalize that learner development is best supported in socially interactive, scaffolded environments.

Jean Piaget's Constructivist Theory, proposed in 1954, posits that children actively build knowledge through interaction with their surroundings across stages of cognitive growth. Learning is an active, exploratory process where children engage with their environment through manipulation and discovery (McLeod, 2025). This theory anchors the study by framing play as a key context for experiential learning that promotes creativity, motivation, and social skills, facilitating developmental progression.

Moreover, creativity is fostered as children assimilate and accommodate new experiences through active problem-solving during play. Motivation stems from innate curiosity and the drive to resolve cognitive conflicts encountered during these exploratory activities. Social skills develop as children interact with peers negotiating rules and roles in play, fostering cognitive and social maturation in line with Piagetian theory.

Consequently, play-integrated learning reflects Piaget's constructivist emphasis on learner-centered, hands-on engagement. Creativity flourishes through opportunities for discovery, motivation is sustained by enjoyable challenges, and social skills evolve through peer interaction. This supports the generalization that active engagement is essential for holistic cognitive and social development in early education.

Maria Montessori's Method, developed in 1912, advocates for learner autonomy within a thoughtfully prepared environment filled with sensory and practical activities. Children learn best when given freedom to explore and choose meaningful tasks that nurture concentration, creativity, and independence (Ruhl, 2024). Anchoring the study, Montessori's method aligns with play-integrated learning as a purposeful, child-directed approach that develops motivation and social competence alongside creativity.

In addition, creativity emerges through open-ended materials inviting exploration and problem-solving. Motivation is nurtured intrinsically as learners select activities aligned with their interests and developmental needs. Social skills develop naturally as children collaboratively use shared spaces and materials, learning respect and cooperation consistent with Montessori principles.

Therefore, the study's emphasis on play reflects Montessori's view that autonomy and structured freedom cultivate creativity and motivation effectively. Social competence also evolves through cooperative participation. The generalization here is that purposeful, child-led play environments empower comprehensive learner development across cognitive, motivational, and social domains.

David Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory, introduced in 1984, describes learning as a continuous cycle involving concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. Learning is optimized when individuals directly engage in meaningful experience followed by reflection and application (Kolb, 2014). This theory anchors the study by describing play-integrated learning as an experiential process driving creativity,

motivation, and social skills through active participation.

Moreover, creativity develops as learners experiment and formulate novel ideas in concrete play experiences. Motivation is reinforced by the relevance and immediate feedback inherent in these activities. Social skills improve through collaborative reflection and knowledge co-construction with peers during these experiential cycles.

Therefore, integrating play within learning mirrors Kolb's model by allowing learners to cycle through experience, reflection, and application. This process fosters creativity through experimentation, sustains motivation through meaningful activity, and enhances social skills through cooperative learning. This generalizes the idea that active, reflective experiences underpin effective early learning.

Erik Erikson's Psychosocial Development Theory, formulated in 1950, delineates eight stages characterized by social and emotional conflicts vital for personality formation. Early stages highlight trust, autonomy, initiative, and social competence, all developed through relationships with caregivers and peers (Maree, 2022). Anchoring the study, Erikson's theory emphasizes how play supports emotional and social growth that influences creativity and motivation in children.

Furthermore, the initiative versus guilt stage relates to creativity by allowing children to explore and assert themselves in play. Motivation develops as children experience competence and encouragement through successful social interactions. Social skills evolve as they form trusting relationships and navigate peer dynamics during play activities.

Thus, play-integrated learning supports psychosocial tasks fundamental to emotional well-being, creativity, and motivation, fostering identity formation and interpersonal growth. Applying Erikson's framework generalizes that early developmental challenges are best met through play-based experiences that nurture social and emotional competencies essential for lifelong learning.

Play-based learning is central to fostering the holistic development of learners, particularly in creativity, motivation, and social skills. This study is supported by multiple legal bases that emphasize the importance of providing quality, accessible, and developmentally appropriate education aligned with these learner outcomes.

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 4: Quality Education, underline the global commitment to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education. Target 4.2 explicitly mandates that "By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care, and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education" (UNICEF. 2023). This provision aligns with the study's focus, reinforcing the importance of early childhood education programs like play-integrated learning to prepare learners effectively for their educational journey.

Moreover, the 1987 Philippine Constitution, Article XIV, Section 1 states, "The State shall protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels and shall take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all" (Supreme Court E-Library, n.d.). This constitutional mandate supports the study by obligating the State to provide educational programs that promote quality learning experiences, including those that foster creativity, motivation, and social competencies through approaches such as play-integrated learning.

Republic Act No. 10533 or the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013 further supports this study. Section 5, Paragraph a (1) provides that the curriculum should "Adopt a learner-centered, inclusive, and developmentally appropriate curriculum that shall be designed to guarantee mastery of basic competencies and 21st-century skills such as critical and creative thinking, collaboration, communication, and character development (GOVPH, 2013)." This law explicitly mandates educational approaches that nurture creativity and motivation, which play-based learning inherently supports by engaging learners in meaningful and interactive activities.

Republic Act No. 10157, known as the Kindergarten Education Act of 2012, highlights early childhood education's importance. Section 2 declares, "In consonance with the Millennium Development Goals on achieving Education for All (EFA) by the year 2015, it is hereby declared the policy of the State to provide equal opportunities for all children to avail of accessible mandatory and compulsory kindergarten education that effectively promotes physical, social, intellectual, emotional and skills stimulation and values formation to sufficiently prepare them for formal elementary schooling." Meanwhile, Section 3(c) clarifies, "Kindergarten education shall be understood in this Act to mean one (1) year of preparatory education for children at least five (5) years old as a prerequisite for Grade 1" (Supreme Court E-Library, 2015). These provisions justify the study's focus on play-integrated learning as a suitable approach to stimulate creativity and social skills among kindergarten learners.

Lastly, the Department of Education (DepEd) Order No. 47, s. 2016, the Omnibus Policy on Kindergarten Education, emphasizes that "Kindergarten education provides equal opportunities for all children to accessible, mandatory and compulsory kindergarten education that effectively promotes physical, social, cognitive, and emotional skills stimulation and values formation offered to all five (5)-year old Filipino children to sufficiently prepare them for Grade One" (Department of Education, n.d.). This policy directly supports the study's emphasis on developmentally appropriate and play-based pedagogies as essential for fostering key learner outcomes in early education.

In summary, play-integrated learning has gained recognition as a powerful pedagogical approach that nurtures learners' creativity, motivation, and social skills through active, experiential engagement; however, existing studies reveal critical gaps that justify the main objectives of the present study. While Ekeh (2023), Florita and Sabud (2025), Celedonio (2025), Sulaimon et al. (2025), Gica et al. (2025), and Gebremariam and Darge (2025) all affirm the positive impact

of play-based methods on early-grade and kindergarten learners, they are constrained by limited sample sizes, narrow geographic or institutional scopes, and qualitative or quasi-experimental designs that restrict generalizability. Moreover, several works document challenges such as low teacher understanding of play-based pedagogy, inadequate professional development, time and resource constraints, weak parental involvement, and limited focus on long-term developmental outcomes, yet none offers a comprehensive, large-scale, context-specific assessment of how play-integrated learning systematically predicts creativity, motivation, and social skills in public kindergarten settings.

These gaps—particularly the lack of robust, district-level, descriptive-correlational evidence linking structured play implementation to multiple learner outcomes—motivate the present study to holistically examine the extent to which a play-integrated learning approach in selected public elementary schools in the 3rd Congressional District of Bohol shapes kindergarten learners' creativity, motivation, and social skills, and to develop an action plan that addresses systemic barriers and strengthens play-based practices in early childhood education.

2. The Problem

A. Statement of the Problem

The study aimed to examine the influence of play-integrated learning on kindergarten learners' creativity, motivation, and social skills among public elementary school in the selected districts of the 3rd Congressional District of Bohol for S.Y. 2025 – 2026 with the objective of proposing strategies to enhance these key learner outcomes.

Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions:

1) What is the demographic profile of the teacher respondents in terms of:
    1. age;
    2. sex;
    3. highest educational attainment;
    4. teaching position;
    5. length of service; and
    6. number of hours of relevant trainings?
2) What is the demographic profile of the parent respondents in terms of:
    1. age;
    2. sex; and
    3. highest educational attainment?
3) To what extent is the play-integrated learning approach implemented in the classroom in term of:
    1. imagination and creativity;
    2. cognitive growth;
    3. emotional and behavioral benefits;
    4. literacy improvement;
    5. greater independence; and
    6. physical fitness?
4) What is the level of creativity of the learners?
5) What is the level of motivation of the learners?
6) What is the level of social skills of the learners?
7) Does the extent of implementation of play-integrated learning approach in the classroom significantly predicts learners' creativity?
8) Does the extent of implementation of play-integrated learning approach in the classroom significantly predicts learners' motivation?
9) Does the extent of implementation of play-integrated learning approach in the classroom significantly predicts learners' social skills?
10) What action plan can be proposed based on the findings of the study?

B. Null Hypotheses

This study is directed towards either accepting or rejecting the following null hypotheses:

1. The extent of implementation of play-integrated learning approach in the classroom does not significantly predicts learners' creativity.
2. The extent of implementation of play-integrated learning approach in the classroom does not significantly predicts learners' motivation.
3. The extent of implementation of play-integrated learning approach in the classroom does not significantly predicts learners' social skills.

C. Significance of the Study

This study holds significant promise in shedding light on the diverse benefits of play-integrated learning for kindergarten learners.

Department of Education. They will gain insights on how incorporating play-integrated learning approaches can enhance curriculum frameworks and instructional standards, fostering holistic development in young learners.

School Administrators. They can understand the importance of allocating resources and designing professional development programs that equip teachers with skills to implement play-based pedagogies effectively.

Teachers. They will benefit by learning practical, evidence-based strategies to integrate play into learning activities, thereby enhancing student engagement, creativity, motivation, and social skills.

Parents and Guardians. They can appreciate how play-integrated learning positively influences their children's development, enabling more effective support and advocacy for their children's educational needs.

Elementary Pupils. They will directly benefit from enriched learning environments that promote cognitive, social, emotional, and physical growth through play, preparing them for future academic success.

Curriculum Developers. They can utilize findings to create developmentally appropriate, engaging instructional materials aligned with play-based learning principles.

Future Researchers. They will have a foundation for further studies exploring innovative methodologies and long-term impacts of play-integrated learning in early childhood education.

3. Research Methodology

A. Design

This study employed a descriptive-correlational design, which will be particularly relevant for examining the relationships among various factors within the context of play-integrated learning for kindergarten pupils (Mertens, 2023). The descriptive approach allowed for a detailed exploration of the respondents' demographic profiles and the extent to which the play-integrated learning approach will be implemented in classrooms, focusing on areas such as imagination and creativity, cognitive growth, emotional and behavioral benefits, literacy improvement, greater independence, and physical fitness. This aligned with quantitative research methods that seek to quantify characteristics and behaviors to provide a comprehensive overview of the current educational landscape (Sarker, 2021). The correlational component aimed to identify the relationships between the extent of play-integrated learning implementation and its impact on learners' creativity, motivation, and social skills, enabling the researcher to determine how these instructional practices influence student outcomes. Data collection through surveys facilitated the statistical analysis of numerical data revealing patterns and trends essential for informed decision-making.

B. Environment and Participants

The research was conducted in the selected districts of the 3rd Congressional District of Bohol, which includes the municipalities of Candijay, Alicia, Mabini, Anda, and Guindulman. The district is located in southeastern Bohol and serves a diverse population across several municipalities. It has 1,664 public elementary school teachers who make up the primary teaching workforce in the area.

Out of this population, using Cochran's formula at a 95% confidence level, 276 respondents were selected to participate in the study. To determine the number of respondents from each district, the researcher utilized random sampling to ensure proportional representation that reflects the population distribution across the municipalities. The study included only permanent kindergarten teachers with at least one year of experience to ensure reliable insights into play-integrated learning. Less experienced, substitute, and probationary teachers were excluded. Parents included were those actively involved in their children's education.

Table 1
Distribution of the respondents

District	Teachers	Parents	Total
Candijay	22	37	59
Alicia	17	29	46
Mabini	21	32	53
Anda	17	36	53
Guindulman	19	46	65
TOTAL:	96	180	276

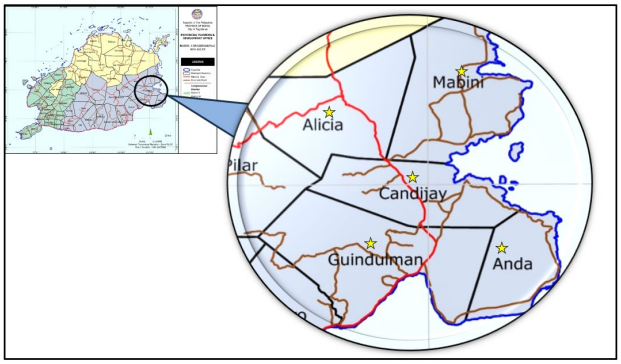

Fig. 2. Map of bohol 3rd congressional district distribution of respondents

C. Instrument

The researcher primarily used an adapted survey questionnaire to collect the necessary data from the respondents. The survey instrument was structured into five distinct parts to comprehensively cover the study's scope. The first part captured the demographic profile of the respondents, including age, sex, highest educational attainment, teaching position, grade level taught, length of service, and number of hours of relevant trainings. This section aimed to provide detailed background information about the teachers whose experiences and practices will inform the study.

The second part of the questionnaire measured the extent to which the play-integrated learning approach is implemented in the classroom. It assessed six categories, namely imagination and creativity, cognitive growth, emotional and behavioral benefits, literacy improvement, greater independence, and physical fitness. This section included 42 items—seven items per category—rated on a 4-point Likert scale from 4 (Strongly Agree) to 1 (Strongly Disagree). This tool was adapted from Aguilar (2024), whose research focused on play-based learning concepts and the development of teaching among kindergarten teachers.

The third part assessed the level of creativity among learners using a scale derived from Kumar, Kemmler, and Holman (1997), specifically the Creativity Styles Questionnaire—Revised. The fourth part measured learners' motivation levels, adapted from Cook (2025) who studied fostering intrinsic motivation in kindergarten settings. Both these sections included 15 to 20 items, with responses recorded on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 4 (Always) to 1 (Never).

The fifth part evaluated the learners' social skills based on the Social Skills Rating System—Brazilian Version, adapted from Del Prette (2015), which has undergone exploratory and confirmatory factorial analyses. This section similarly used a 4-point Likert scale and comprise 15 to 20 items aimed at capturing social competencies relevant to early childhood development.

D. Procedure

The research procedure and data gathering process followed a systematic and ethical approach to ensure the study's validity and integrity. Initially, the researcher sought approval from the Dean of School of Advance Studies to conduct the research, which is a standard protocol for ensuring institutional support and compliance. Following this, the research manuscript was submitted to the Ethics and Review Board for approval. This ethical review was crucial to ensure that the study safeguards the rights and welfare of the respondents and adheres to established ethical standards in research, especially when working with human participants (Philippine research ethics guidelines, 2025).

Upon receiving approval from the Ethics and Review Board, the researcher requested permission from the School Division Superintendent of Bohol to distribute questionnaires to the target respondents in the selected districts. Once the official permit is granted, transmittal letters was sent to the Public Schools district supervisors who will facilitate the distribution of the survey tools to the elementary teachers. To accommodate the respondents' preferences and improve response rates, the researcher utilized offline survey administration methods.

Before administering the survey, informed consent forms were distributed to all potential respondents, clearly explaining the study's objectives, voluntary participation, confidentiality, and data usage. Only upon receiving consent was the participants be given the questionnaire to complete. The researcher then collected the completed survey tools systematically. The collected data were organized, tabulated, and summarized using appropriate statistical tools. Subsequent analysis and interpretation of the data were conducted to reveal trends, relationships, and significant findings. These results informed the formulation of conclusions, recommendations, and the development of an action plan aimed at enhancing the implementation of play-integrated learning in elementary classrooms.

E. Statistical Treatment

The researcher employed both descriptive and inferential statistical treatments to analyze the data gathered from the study. Descriptive statistics was used to explore and characterize the demographic profile of the respondents, including variables such as age, sex, highest educational attainment, teaching position, grade level taught, length of service, and the number of hours of relevant trainings. Frequency and percentage distributions were calculated to provide a clear and concise summary of these demographic characteristics.

$$\% = \frac{f}{N} x100$$

where: f = frequency
N = total number of responses

For variables related to the extent of implementation of the play-integrated learning approach as well as the levels of learners' creativity, motivation, and social skills, the researcher used weighted mean scores.

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum fx}{N}$$

where: $\bar{x}$ *= weighted mean*

Table 2

Numerical Scale	Verbal Description	Interpretation	Meaning
3.25 – 4.00	Strongly Agree (SA)	Very High Extent	The respondent fully supports and recognizes the strong implementation of the Play-Integrated Learning Approach.
2.50 – 3.24	Agree (A)	High Extent	The respondent agrees that the Play-Integrated Learning Approach is implemented to a considerable degree.
1.75 – 2.49	Disagree (D)	Low Extent	The respondent disagrees and perceives the implementation of the Play-Integrated Learning Approach as insufficient.
1.00 – 1.74	Strongly Disagree (SD)	Very Low Extent	The respondent strongly disagrees, indicating the Play-Integrated Learning Approach is hardly or not implemented.
For the level of creativity:			
Numerical Scale	**Verbal Description**	**Interpretation**	**Meaning**
3.25 – 4.00	Always (A)	Very High	The student consistently demonstrates creative behavior or skills.
2.50 – 3.24	Often (O)	High	The student frequently shows creativity in various tasks or activities.
1.75 – 2.49	Sometimes (S)	Low	The student occasionally displays creative thinking or actions.
1.00 – 1.74	Never (N)	Very Low	The student rarely or never exhibits creativity.
For the level of motivation:			
Numerical Scale	**Verbal Description**	**Interpretation**	**Meaning**
3.25 – 4.00	Always (A)	Very High	The student consistently shows strong motivation in learning activities.
2.50 – 3.24	Often (O)	High	The student frequently demonstrates motivation during tasks.
1.75 – 2.49	Sometimes (S)	Low	The student occasionally exhibits motivation in learning.
1.00 – 1.74	Never (N)	Very Low	The student rarely or never shows motivation.
For the level of social skills:			
Numerical Scale	**Verbal Description**	**Interpretation**	**Meaning**
3.25 – 4.00	Always (A)	Very High	The student consistently demonstrates strong social skills.
2.50 – 3.24	Often (O)	High	The student frequently shows good social interaction abilities.
1.75 – 2.49	Sometimes (S)	Low	The student occasionally displays social skills in interactions.
1.00 – 1.74	Never (N)	Very Low	The student rarely or never exhibits social skills.

$\sum fx$ = *summation of the frequencies*

N = *number of weights*

An arbitrary scale was developed to interpret the results for these variables, giving contextual meaning to the numerical data. For the extent of implementation of play-based learning approach:

In terms of inferential statistics, the researcher analyzed relationships and associations between variables to derive meaningful insights beyond mere description. To examine the association between respondents' demographic profiles and the extent of implementation of the play-integrated learning approach in the classroom, the regression analysis was utilized. This statistical test is appropriate for continuous data and will help determine if demographic factors significantly relate to how extensively play-integrated learning is practiced.

Furthermore, simple linear regression analysis was applied to assess the strength and direction of the relationships between the extent of implementation of play-integrated learning and learners' creativity, motivation, and social skills. This allowed the researcher to identify predictive or associative trends between instructional practices and learner outcomes. Moreover, to determine that play-based integration as significant predictor of learners' creativity, motivation, and social skills, linear regression analysis was employed.

$$\hat{y} = b_o + b_1 x$$

$\hat{y}$ = Estimated, or predicted *y* value

b_0 = unbiased estimate of the regression INTERCEPT

b_1 = unbiased estimate of the regression SLOPE

x = value of the independent variable

4. Definition of Terms

To facilitate understanding on the part of the readers, the following terms are operationally defined:

Creativity. The elementary learners' ability to generate original ideas, express thoughts imaginatively, and approach tasks with innovation and flexibility, fostered through opportunities for exploration and invention in the play-integrated learning classroom.

Motivation. It is the internal drive and enthusiasm of elementary learners to engage, persist, and succeed in learning tasks, which the play-integrated approach aims to enhance by making learning enjoyable and purposeful.

Play-Integrated Learning Approach. An educational method that combines purposeful play with structured learning objectives to foster holistic development across cognitive, social, emotional, and physical domains in elementary learners.

Social Skills. It encompasses the interpersonal competencies elementary learners develop, such as communication, cooperation, empathy, and conflict resolution, which are nurtured through collaborative play and interactive learning experiences.

5. Presentation, Analysis, and Interpretation of Data

This chapter presents, analyzes, and interprets the data gathered from the study on the influence of play-integrated learning on kindergarten learners' creativity, motivation, and social skills in selected public elementary schools within the 3rd Congressional District of Bohol for S.Y. 2025–2026. It begins with a detailed description of the respondents' demographic profile, including age, sex, highest educational attainment, teaching position, length of service, and number of hours of relevant trainings. This is followed by an examination of the extent to which the play-integrated learning approach is implemented in classrooms, covering dimensions such as imagination and creativity, cognitive growth, emotional and behavioral benefits, literacy improvement, greater independence, and physical fitness.

Subsequently, the chapter delineates the levels of learners' creativity, motivation, and social skills. Finally, it explores the predictive relationships through regression analyses, determining whether the extent of play-integrated learning implementation significantly predicts learners' creativity, motivation, and social skills, thereby laying the groundwork for strategic action plan in subsequent chapter.

Table 3 presents the demographic profile of the 96 teacher respondents, highlighting key characteristics such as age, sex, highest educational attainment, teaching position, length of service, and number of hours of relevant training.

The age profile of the 96 teacher respondents reveals a predominantly young to middle-aged workforce, with the overwhelming majority (82 respondents, or 85.40%) falling within the 30–40 years old bracket, securing the top rank. This concentration suggests a relatively youthful teaching staff, potentially bringing fresh energy and contemporary approaches to their roles in public elementary schools. Tied for second place are the younger cohort below 30 years old and the older group aged 41–50 years old, each comprising 7 respondents (7.30%), indicating minimal representation at the extremes of the age spectrum. Overall, no respondents exceed 50 years, underscoring a lean toward mid-career professionals who may balance experience with adaptability in the CAMAG's educational context.

In terms of sex, the respondent pool is markedly female-dominated, with 94 females (97.90%) ranking first and just 2 males (2.10%) ranking second. This distribution aligns with broader trends in early childhood education in the Philippines, where women traditionally predominate in kindergarten teaching roles (Bartolome et al. 2020). Such a skew could influence classroom dynamics and team compositions. The near absence of male teachers highlights potential gender imbalances in the workforce, which may warrant targeted recruitment strategies to diversify perspectives in the school setting.

Length of service data portrays a mid-tenured faculty, dominated by 53 respondents (55.20%) with 5–10 years of experience, ranking first. This group is trailed by 28 with 11–15 years (29.20%, rank 2), 13 with below 5 years (13.50%, rank 3), and only 2 with 16 years and above (2.10%, rank 4). The peak in the 5–10 year range signals a core of moderately experienced teachers suited to public elementary school and leadership in school operations. The minimal presence of entry-level Teacher I's suggests stability in staffing within the 3rd Congressional District. This distribution implies robust institutional experience among the sample.

Table 3
Profile of teacher respondents N = 96

	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Rank
1.1 Age			
Below 30 years old	7	7.30	2.5
30 – 40 years old	82	85.40	1
41 – 50 years old	7	7.30	2.5
TOTAL	96	100%	
1.2 Sex			
Male	2	2.10	2
Female	94	97.90	1
TOTAL	96	100%	
1.3 Highest Educational Attainment			
Baccalaureate's Degree	24	25.00	2
Units Earned in Master's Degree	63	65.60	1
Master's Degree	8	8.30	3
Units Earned in Doctor's Degree	1	1.00	4
TOTAL	96	100%	
1.4 Teaching Position			
Teacher I	7	7.30	3
Teacher II	42	43.80	2
Teacher III	47	49.00	1
TOTAL	96	100%	
1.5 Length of Service			
Below 5 years	13	13.50	3
5 – 10 years	53	55.20	1
11 – 15 years	28	29.20	2
16 years and above	2	2.10	4
TOTAL	96	100%	
1.6 Number of Hours of Relevant Training			
None	1	1.00	5
1 – 40 hours	13	13.50	4
41 – 80 hours	24	25.00	3
81 – 120 hours	25	26.00	2
More than 120 hours	33	34.40	1
TOTAL	96	100%	

The highest educational attainment of the teachers shows a strong emphasis on graduate-level preparation, led by 63 respondents (65.60%) who have earned units in a Master's degree, holding the top rank. This is followed by 24 with a Baccalaureate's Degree (25.00%, rank 2), 8 with a completed Master's Degree (8.30%, rank 3), and a single respondent (1.00%, rank 4) with units in a Doctor's Degree. The predominance of Master's-level pursuits reflects a committed faculty investing in advanced training, positioning them well within CAMAG's public school system.

Teaching positions among the respondents are concentrated at higher levels, with 47 Teacher III's (49.00%) ranking first, followed closely by 42 Teacher II's (43.80%, rank 2), and 7 Teacher I's (7.30%, rank 3). This hierarchy indicates a seasoned group of mid-to-senior educators, likely with greater autonomy demands. Limited long-service veterans may reflect turnover dynamics in rural districts like CAMAG's.

Training hours peak at more than 120 hours for 33 respondents (34.40%, rank 1), followed by 81–120 hours (25 respondents, 26.00%, rank 2), 41–80 hours (24, 25.00%, rank 3), 1–40 hours (13, 13.50%, rank 4), and none (1, 1.00%, rank 5). This upward skew demonstrates substantial professional development investment among the teachers. In the context of CAMAG's public schools, such training breadth equips the sample for ongoing educational roles, highlighting opportunities for further capacity-buildings.

Table 4 presents the demographic profile of the 180 parent respondents, highlighting key characteristics such as age, sex, and highest educational attainment.

The age profile of the 180 parent respondents indicates a

Table 4
Profile of parent respondents N = 180

	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Rank
1.1 Age			
Below 30 years old	111	61.70	1
30 – 40 years old	53	29.40	2
41 – 50 years old	16	8.90	3
TOTAL	180	100%	
1.2 Sex			
Female	180	100.00	1
TOTAL	180	100%	
1.3 Highest Educational Attainment			
Below Tertiary Level	37	20.60	2
Baccalaureate's Degree	141	78.30	1
Units Earned in Master's Degree	1	0.60	3.5
Master's Degree	1	0.60	3.5
TOTAL		100%	

predominantly young parental group, with 111 individuals (61.70%) below 30 years old ranking first, reflecting a youthful demographic likely tied to recent family formations in Bohol's communities. Following this are 53 parents (29.40%, rank 2) aged 30–40 years, and 16 (8.90%, rank 3) in the 41–50 years bracket, showing a tapering off at older ages. This distribution suggests an active, early-stage parenting cohort serving public elementary schools in CAMAG, with limited middle-aged representation that may influence family-school engagement patterns.

Regarding sex, all 180 parent respondents (100.00%) are female, unanimously ranking first, with no male respondents recorded. This complete female composition aligns with common survey response patterns in Philippine household studies, where mothers often serve as primary caregivers and school liaisons in kindergarten contexts (Lasco and Mendoza, 2025). The absence of male participants underscores a potential maternal focus in parental involvement within Bohol's public schools, possibly reflecting cultural norms around family roles.

The highest educational attainment among parent respondents is overwhelmingly at the tertiary level, dominated by 141 individuals (78.30%) holding a Baccalaureate's Degree, securing rank 1. This is followed by 37 below tertiary level (20.60%, rank 2), and tied for rank 3.5 are 1 each with units earned in a Master's Degree and a completed Master's Degree (both 0.60%). Such a high concentration of college graduates' points to an educated parental base in the selected districts, well-positioned to support school initiatives in the local educational landscape.

Table 5
Extent of implementation of Play-Integrated learning approach in the classroom in terms of imagination and Creativity N1 = 96; N2 = 180

Indicators	Teachers		Parents		Overall		
The teachers…	WM	Desc	WM	Desc	WM	Desc	Rank
1. stretch the preschool imagination to play on the concept and development of play-based learning	3.80	SA	3.76	SA	3.78	SA	2
2. navigate to help the imagination and creativity skills in navigating life and the development process of learning.	3.85	SA	3.82	SA	3.84	SA	1
3. provides imaginative creativity on the object and ability in a symbolic play of learning which is necessary in the development of preschool children.	3.84	SA	3.63	SA	3.74	SA	4
4. build the need of preschool children for problem-solving and future learning.	3.73	SA	3.59	SA	3.66	SA	5
5. contribute to the improved quality of the learning process and success at the preschool level.	3.86	SA	3.66	SA	3.76	SA	3
6. create a combined imagination and knowledge of the school teachers' practices to stimulate children's development of learning.	3.32	SA	3.55	SA	3.44	SA	7
7. adopt the approach of imagination and creativity to understand the teachers' experiences inside the classroom.	3.60	SA	3.70	SA	3.65	SA	6
AVERAGE WEIGHTED MEAN	3.72	SA	3.67	SA	3.70	Very High Extent	

Legend:

Numerical Scale	Verbal Description	Interpretation
3.25 – 4.00	Strongly Agree (SA)	Very High Extent
2.50 – 3.24	Agree (A)	High Extent
1.75 – 2.49	Disagree (D)	Low Extent
1.00 – 1.74	Strongly Disagree (SD)	Very Low Extent

Table 5 illustrates the extent of implementation of the play-integrated learning approach in the classroom as perceived by 96 teachers and 180 parents in terms of imagination and creativity.

Teachers and parents strongly recognize the role of play in guiding preschoolers' imaginative skills, as reflected in the top-rated item, item no. 2., "navigate to help the imagination and creativity skills in navigating life and the development process of learning", with an overall weighted mean of 3.84 (Strongly Agree), ranking 1st. This emphasis highlights effective practices in fostering creativity through life's developmental navigation in CAMAG's kindergarten classrooms.

Perceptions are relatively lower regarding the fusion of teachers' imaginative expertise with learning stimulation, as seen in the bottom-rated item, item no. 6, "create a combined

imagination and knowledge of the school teachers' practices to stimulate children's development of learning", with an overall weighted mean of 3.44 (Strongly Agree), ranking 7th. This suggests opportunities to strengthen teacher practices in integrating imagination for child development.

The overall average weighted mean stands at 3.70, interpreted as Very High Extent of implementation, affirming robust adoption of play-integrated learning for imagination and creativity across both respondent groups. This finding aligns with a study by Gica et al. (2025) which found that play-based pedagogies in preschool settings significantly enhance imaginative processes when teachers actively scaffold creativity, mirroring the high implementation levels observed here and supporting the potential for positive learner outcomes.

Table 6 illustrates the extent of play-integrated learning implementation in the classroom focusing on cognitive growth, as rated by teachers and parents

Teachers and parents highly value the enhancement of neural pathways through play, as shown in the top-rated item 3 "increase and strengthen the brain and connection of the path and thinking utilization learning process", with an overall weighted mean of 3.84 (Strongly Agree), ranking 1st. This standout perception emphasizes robust practices in bolstering brain connections and thinking processes via play-based activities in CAMAG's kindergarten classrooms.

Perceptions dip slightly for recognizing play's role in academic progress, evident in the bottom-rated item 7 "establish an interaction-based intervention cognitive development of preschool children inclusive nurture approach and learning", with an overall weighted mean of 3.63 (Strongly Agree), ranking 7th. This indicates relative potential for improvement in interactive, nurturing interventions supporting cognitive development.

Across all items, the average weighted mean was 3.74,

Table 6
Extent of implementation of Play-Integrated learning approach in the classroom in terms of cognitive growth N1 = 96; N2 = 180

Indicators	**Teachers**		**Parents**		**Overall**		
The teachers…	WM	Desc	WM	Desc	WM	Desc	Rank
1. foster healthy and essential brain development in preschool children.	3.88	SA	3.64	SA	3.76	SA	4
2. direct the kids to their play-based learning activities and schedules cognitive growth and development to provide positive ways in the learning process.	3.82	SA	3.79	SA	3.81	SA	3
3. increase and strengthen the brain and connection of the path and thinking utilization learning process.	3.71	SA	3.97	SA	3.84	SA	1
4. help build the influences on the learning process and solving problems on the knowledge gain and environment learning.	3.65	SA	4.00	SA	3.82	SA	2
5. promote learning in cognitive development and benefits students in an interactive environment.	3.42	SA	4.00	SA	3.71	SA	5
6. explore the necessity of the positive impact in the development and academic improvement of cognitive skills among preschool children.	3.33	SA	3.94	SA	3.64	SA	6
7. establish an interaction-based intervention cognitive development of preschool children inclusive nurture approach and learning.	3.53	SA	3.73	SA	3.63	SA	7
AVERAGE WEIGHTED MEAN	3.62	SA	3.87	SA	3.74	Very High Extent	

Legend:

Numerical Scale	Verbal Description	Interpretation
3.25 – 4.00	Strongly Agree (SA)	Very High Extent
2.50 – 3.24	Agree (A)	High Extent
1.75 – 2.49	Disagree (D)	Low Extent
1.00 – 1.74	Strongly Disagree (SD)	Very Low Extent

Table 7
Extent of implementation of Play-Integrated learning approach in the classroom in terms of emotional and behavioral benefits N1 = 96; N2 = 180

Indicators	**Teachers**		**Parents**		**Overall**		
The teachers…	WM	Desc	WM	Desc	WM	Desc	Rank
1. retreat and overwhelm the soothe and activities for play-based learning.	3.74	SA	3.68	SA	3.71	SA	5
2. connect activities in the lives of the preschool learners' performance and output.	3.20	SA	3.96	SA	3.58	SA	7
3. give emotional and behavioral activities which help the learners to reduce anxiety, irritability, and stress	3.77	SA	3.99	SA	3.88	SA	3
4. boost self-esteem and joy for preschool learners to understand better the emotions of every individual child as the center of learning.	3.71	SA	3.99	SA	3.85	SA	4
5. provides children to listen for the care-given experiences in the communication experiences of learning.	3.32	SA	3.98	SA	3.65	SA	6
6. navigate children to play and learn for fun in the school process and understanding.	3.94	SA	3.98	SA	3.96	SA	1
7. explore how to teach children in groups to speak, solve conflict, share, and negotiate for themselves the learning process on the emotional and behavior of students.	3.90	SA	4.00	SA	3.95	SA	2
AVERAGE WEIGHTED MEAN	3.65	SA	3.94	SA	3.80	Very High Extent	

Legend:

Numerical Scale	Verbal Description	Interpretation
3.25 – 4.00	Strongly Agree (SA)	Very High Extent
2.50 – 3.24	Agree (A)	High Extent
1.75 – 2.49	Disagree (D)	Low Extent
1.00 – 1.74	Strongly Disagree (SD)	Very Low Extent

interpreted as Very High Extent of implementation, confirming strong adoption of play-integrated learning for cognitive growth across respondent groups. This result corroborates findings from a study by Momodu (2024) which demonstrated that playful interactions significantly fortify cognitive connections and problem-solving in early childhood.

Table 7 illustrates the extent of play-integrated learning implementation in the classroom focusing on emotional and behavioral benefits such as stress reduction, self-esteem, and social interaction.

Teachers and parents strongly endorse play as a source of enjoyment and engagement, as reflected in the top-rated item 6 "'navigate children to play and learn for fun in the school process and understanding'", with an overall weighted mean of 3.96 (Strongly Agree), ranking 1st. This leading item highlights exemplary practices in making play fun and educational, central to emotional well-being in CAMAG's kindergarten classrooms.

Endorsement is comparatively lower for linking play activities to learners' daily lives, as indicated by the bottom-rated item 2 "'connect activities in the lives of the preschool learners' performance and output'", with an overall weighted mean of 3.58 (Strongly Agree), ranking 7th. This points to areas for better alignment between play-based tasks and real-life preschooler experiences.

The result's average weighted mean of 3.80 signifies Very High Extent of implementation, validating widespread use of play-integrated learning for emotional and behavioral benefits.

Among the statements, item 7 "develop the model of inquiry learning and literacy improvement, implementation, and standardization of the model of learning and teaching resources in the classroom setting" obtained the highest overall weighted mean of 3.94 (Strongly Agree), ranking 1st.

This indicates that both teachers and parents perceive the classroom as consistently using an inquiry-oriented, play-integrated model that is systematically implemented and supported by standardized learning and teaching resources, thereby reinforcing literacy development in CAMAG's kindergarten classrooms.

The lowest-ranked statement, item 1 "implement the model of inquiry learning and the improvement of critical skills and thinking of students", recorded an overall weighted mean of 3.82 (Strongly Agree), ranking 7th. Although this is still interpreted as Very High Extent, the comparatively lower mean suggests that emphasis on explicitly linking inquiry-based play activities to the development of critical thinking and higher-order literacy skills is relatively less pronounced than other aspects of literacy-oriented play practices.

The composite average weighted mean for the domain is 3.90, interpreted as Very High Extent of implementation, indicating that play-integrated strategies are strongly embedded in literacy-oriented classroom activities. This high level of implementation is consistent with the study of Abella et al. (2025), which shows that guided, teacher-facilitated play can significantly enhance phonological awareness, vocabulary, and narrative comprehension in early childhood settings, supporting the idea that play-integrated learning in CAMAG's public schools similarly contributes to strong foundations in literacy.

Table 8
Extent of implementation of Play-Integrated learning approach in the classroom in terms of literacy improvement N1 = 96; N2 = 180

Indicators	**Teachers**		**Parents**		**Overall**		
The teachers…	WM	Desc	WM	Desc	WM	Desc	Rank
1. implement the model of inquiry learning and the improvement of critical skills and thinking of students.	3.65	SA	4.00	SA	3.82	SA	7
2. help preschool children develop to learn and to listen to the sound of words.	3.86	SA	3.99	SA	3.93	SA	3
3. help to understand the process of literacy skills and improvement in the role of the narrative structure of how language can work for the learners.	3.85	SA	4.00	SA	3.93	SA	2
4. develop and maintain observation, abilities, and attention to support the comprehension and understanding application learning process	3.76	SA	4.00	SA	3.88	SA	6
5. develop resources and better learning on strategy and literacy to facilitate learning actively in the trend of quality education.	3.78	SA	4.00	SA	3.89	SA	5
6. build competency in students' discovery and problem-solving needed in the ability of critical thinking literacy improvement in learning.	3.85	SA	4.00	SA	3.93	SA	4
7. develop the model of inquiry learning and literacy improvement, implementation, and standardization of the model of learning and teaching resources in the classroom setting.	3.89	SA	4.00	SA	3.94	SA	1
AVERAGE WEIGHTED MEAN	3.81	SA	4.00	SA	3.90	Very High Extent	

Legend:

Numerical Scale	Verbal Description	Interpretation
3.25 – 4.00	Strongly Agree (SA)	Very High Extent
2.50 – 3.24	Agree (A)	High Extent
1.75 – 2.49	Disagree (D)	Low Extent
1.00 – 1.74	Strongly Disagree (SD)	Very Low Extent

This aligns with research by Dunca and Turda (2025), which showed play interventions markedly reduce stress and boost self-esteem in young children, paralleling the strong perceptions in this Philippine study.

Table 8 illustrates the extent of play-integrated learning implementation in the classroom focusing on literacy improvement, such as phonological awareness, narrative understanding, and reading readiness.

Table 9 illustrates to what extent the play-integrated learning approach is implemented in the classroom as a strategy for fostering greater independence among kindergarten learners.

Teachers and parents place the strongest emphasis on giving children decision-making power in classroom tasks, as reflected

in item 1 "help the children to have the say or power in the daily task given for the lesson" and item 7 "challenge them to be more independent in the learning improvement because of the structured curriculum to be implemented in the educational system", both obtaining an overall weighted mean of 3.96 (Strongly Agree), tied for rank 1.5. This high level of agreement indicates that play-integrated activities in CAMAG's classrooms are perceived as strongly supporting children's autonomy, allowing them to exercise choice and take ownership of their learning within a structured framework.

Although still interpreted as Very High Extent, these lower-ranked items suggest that opportunities for explicitly guiding children in reading social cues and reflecting on their own solitude and internal thought processes may be less prominent than other aspects of promoting independence.

Across all statements, the composite grand mean was 3.84, interpreted as Very High Extent of implementation, indicating that play-integrated learning is strongly perceived as a vehicle for nurturing greater independence in CAMAG's kindergarten classrooms. This high level of perceived implementation aligns

Table 9
Extent of implementation of Play-Integrated learning approach in the classroom in terms of greater independence N1 = 96; N2 = 180

Indicators	**Teachers**		**Parents**		**Overall**		
The teachers…	WM	Desc	WM	Desc	WM	Desc	Rank
1. help the children to have the say or power in the daily task given for the lesson.	3.92	SA	4.00	SA	3.96	SA	1.5
2. help the learners to develop self-sense of independence where students develop their critical knowledge and thinking.	3.84	SA	4.00	SA	3.92	SA	4
3. help the children to be comfortable and feel solitary on the play of the task in their own capability and ability learning process.	3.89	SA	4.00	SA	3.94	SA	3
4. Develop to contribute to the skills in socializing with members of the group.	3.74	SA	4.00	SA	3.87	SA	5
5. help to socialize and observes cues and interaction on the tasks among the members of the group as part of the learning process.	3.25	SA	4.00	SA	3.63	SA	6.5
6. stimulate ways to monitor their own solitude and creative minds.	3.26	SA	4.00	SA	3.63	SA	6.5
7. challenge them to be more independent in the learning improvement because of the structured curriculum to be implemented in the educational system.	3.92	SA	4.00	SA	3.96	SA	1.5
AVERAGE WEIGHTED MEAN	3.69	SA	4.00	SA	3.84	Very High Extent	

Legend:

Numerical Scale	Verbal Description	Interpretation
3.25 – 4.00	Strongly Agree (SA)	Very High Extent
2.50 – 3.24	Agree (A)	High Extent
1.75 – 2.49	Disagree (D)	Low Extent
1.00 – 1.74	Strongly Disagree (SD)	Very Low Extent

The relatively lowest emphasis is observed on social regulation and self-monitoring during independent tasks, as shown in items 5 "help to socialize and observes cues and interaction on the tasks among the members of the group as part of the learning process" and 6 "stimulate ways to monitor their own solitude and creative minds", both with an overall weighted mean of 3.63 (Strongly Agree), ranking 6.5, respectively.

with contemporary evidence that play-based learning supports children's autonomy, self-regulation, and decision-making by allowing them to make choices, manage their own behavior, and take initiative in learning activities (DeLuca et al., 2020), thus reinforcing the view that play-centered practices in this setting effectively scaffold learner independence.

Table 10
Extent of implementation of Play-Integrated learning approach in the classroom in terms of physical fitness N1 = 96; N2 = 180

Indicators	**Teachers**		**Parents**		**Overall**		
The teachers…	WM	Desc	WM	Desc	WM	Desc	Rank
1. provide motivation on the learning process and implementation on play-based learning in the preschool level of teaching.	3.78	SA	3.94	SA	3.86	SA	6
2. provide preschool children better motor skills and physical play and in moving as part of their exercises in learning.	3.74	SA	3.77	SA	3.75	SA	7
3. promote better exercise for the learners to be physically fit and healthy for better learning performance.	3.84	SA	3.97	SA	3.91	SA	4
4. provide positive and active play throughout the child's life, opportunities, and interest.	3.83	SA	3.97	SA	3.90	SA	5
5. help preschool children to have fun, and increase the function of the cardio-vascular system in the exercise of the learning process.	3.85	SA	3.98	SA	3.92	SA	3
6. sharpen their reflexes and controls their movement and work-out for their physical bodies and improvement of their motor skills and brains.	3.92	SA	3.99	SA	3.96	SA	2
7. support the mental health of children, self-regulates a greater ability in preparation for the learning activity and output.	3.92	SA	4.00	SA	3.96	SA	1
AVERAGE WEIGHTED MEAN	3.84	SA	3.95	SA	3.89	Very High Extent	

Legend:

Numerical Scale	Verbal Description	Interpretation
3.25 – 4.00	Strongly Agree (SA)	Very High Extent
2.50 – 3.24	Agree (A)	High Extent
1.75 – 2.49	Disagree (D)	Low Extent
1.00 – 1.74	Strongly Disagree (SD)	Very Low Extent

Table 10 illustrates the extent of play-integrated learning

implementation in the classroom as a strategy for promoting physical fitness among kindergarten learners.

Teachers and parents most strongly agree with item 7 '"support the mental health of children, self-regulates a greater ability in preparation for the learning activity and output"', which obtained the highest overall weighted mean of 3.96 (Strongly Agree), ranking 1st. This indicates that play-integrated activities are perceived as highly effective in helping children regulate their behavior, manage their energy, and enter learning tasks in a calmer, more focused state, thereby reinforcing the link between physical movement and mental readiness in CAMAG's kindergarten classrooms.

The relatively lowest-ranked statement was item 2 '"provide preschool children better motor skills and physical play and in moving as part of their exercises in learning"', with an overall weighted mean of 3.75 (Strongly Agree), ranking 7th. Although still interpreted as Very High Extent, this lower positioning suggests that while physical activity is present, the explicit focus on systematically improving fundamental motor skills through play may be somewhat less emphasized compared with other aspects of physical-fitness-oriented implementation.

The composite grand mean for the domain was 3.89, interpreted as Very High Extent of implementation, indicating that play-integrated learning is strongly perceived as supporting children's physical fitness through active, enjoyable movement. This level of perceived implementation is consistent with current thinking that active, play-based experiences in early childhood not only enhance motor development and cardiovascular health but also improve attention, self-regulation, and overall school readiness, which aligns with how teachers and parents in CAMAG view the role of play in promoting both physical and learning outcomes.

Table 11 shows the summary of the extent of implementation of the play-integrated learning approach in kindergarten classrooms as perceived by 96 teachers and 180 parents, summarized across six interrelated domains.

The data reveal that, overall, play-integrated learning is implemented at a Very High Extent (grand average weighted mean = 3.82, described as "Very High Extent"), with all six domains falling within the 3.25–4.00 range labeled as Strongly Agree (SA). This indicates that both teachers and parents consistently recognize the regular and meaningful use of play in kindergarten instruction, reflecting broad acceptance and routine application of play-integrated strategies across cognitive, emotional, social, and physical aspects of learning.

Looking at the individual domains, literacy improvement ranks first (Overall WM = 3.90), followed by physical fitness (3.89) and greater independence (3.84), suggesting that kindergarten classrooms are most explicit and confident in integrating play into literacy activities, physical development, and learner autonomy. Teachers and parents agree that play is systematically used to support reading, writing, motor skills, and decision-making, with parents' ratings uniformly at the upper boundary of the scale (WM = 4.00), signaling particularly strong household endorsement of these practices. Emotional and behavioral benefits (3.80) and imagination and creativity (3.70) also fall in the Very High range, indicating that play is widely perceived as a major tool for fostering joy, emotional regulation, and creative expression, even if teachers' mean scores are slightly lower than parents', possibly reflecting a more critical or reflective professional stance.

Table 11
Summary of the Extent of Implementation of Play-Integrated Learning Approach in the Classroom N1 = 96; N2 = 180

Category	Teachers		Parents		Overall		
	WM	Desc	WM	Desc	WM	Desc	Rank
3.1 Imagination and Creativity	3.72	SA	3.67	SA	3.70	SA	6
3.2 Cognitive Growth	3.62	SA	3.87	SA	3.74	SA	5
3.3 Emotional and Behavioral Benefits	3.65	SA	3.94	SA	3.80	SA	4
3.4 Literacy Improvement	3.81	SA	4.00	SA	3.90	SA	1
3.5 Greater Independence	3.69	SA	4.00	SA	3.84	SA	3
3.6 Physical Fitness	3.84	SA	3.95	SA	3.89	SA	2
COMPOSITE MEAN	3.72	SA	3.91	SA	3.82	Very High Extent	

Legend:

Numerical Scale	Interpretation
3.25 – 4.00	Very High Extent
2.50 – 3.24	High Extent
1.75 – 2.49	Low Extent
1.00 – 1.74	Very Low Extent

Cognitive growth, although still rated at a Very High level (Overall WM = 3.74), ranks fifth, with teachers (3.62) scoring lower than parents (3.87). This suggests that teachers may perceive more room for improvement in structuring play to explicitly target higher-order thinking and problem-solving, whereas parents are more likely to view cognitive gains as already deeply embedded in classroom play. The relatively lower teacher mean in this domain highlights a subtle gap between the perceived richness of play practices at home and the practical challenges teachers face in designing and assessing cognitively rigorous play-based activities.

Collectively, the data underscores that play-integrated learning is not only widely present but also positively perceived across all six dimensions, with literacy and physical fitness receiving the highest validation from both stakeholder groups. The consistently Very High scores across teachers and parents imply that the foundation for play-integrated instruction is already strong, but the nuanced differences—such as the lower teacher scores in imagination and creativity and cognitive growth—point to specific areas where professional development, clearer planning guidelines, and more intentional

scaffolding can further deepen the quality of play-integrated learning. In effect, Table B serves as empirical justification for the study's focus: because play-integrated learning is already implemented at a Very High Extent, the next step is to refine, systematize, and explicitly target those dimensions where strengths can be amplified and subtle weaknesses minimized.

Table 12 presents the level of creativity manifested by kindergarten learners as perceived by teachers and parents across 20 behavioral indicators.

Table 12
Level of creativity of the learners N1 = 96; N2 = 180

Indicators	**Teachers**		**Parents**		**Overall**		
The learners…	WM	Desc	WM	Desc	WM	Desc	Rank
1. generate original ideas during classroom activities.	3.86	SA	4.00	SA	3.93	SA	4.5
2. use imagination to solve problems in unique ways.	3.81	SA	4.00	SA	3.91	SA	12.5
3. show curiosity about new and unfamiliar topics.	3.83	SA	4.00	SA	3.92	SA	9.5
4. attempt multiple approaches to complete a task.	3.84	SA	4.00	SA	3.92	SA	9.5
5. take risks in trying out novel ideas without fear of failure.	3.77	SA	3.99	SA	3.88	SA	15
6. enjoy exploring new materials and tools for learning.	3.72	SA	4.00	SA	3.86	SA	18
7. express ideas in creative ways, such as drawing or storytelling.	3.86	SA	3.98	SA	3.92	SA	9.5
8. adapt learned knowledge to different situations creatively.	3.69	SA	3.99	SA	3.84	SA	19
9. are open to unexpected outcomes and uses them productively.	3.86	SA	4.00	SA	3.93	SA	4.5
10. show persistence when facing challenging tasks.	3.77	SA	3.96	SA	3.87	SA	16.5
11. combine different ideas to form new perspectives.	3.89	SA	3.96	SA	3.92	SA	9.5
12. question commonly accepted solutions and seeks alternatives.	3.91	SA	3.94	SA	3.93	SA	4.5
13. collaborate with peers to brainstorm innovative ideas.	3.92	SA	3.95	SA	3.93	SA	4.5
14. display flexibility in thinking when solving problems.	3.86	SA	3.99	SA	3.93	SA	4.5
15. show enthusiasm for creative activities and projects.	3.77	SA	3.96	SA	3.87	SA	16.5
16. exhibit self-motivation to create or invent beyond assigned tasks.	3.67	SA	3.99	SA	3.83	SA	20
17. are aware of their own creative processes and strategies.	3.90	SA	3.97	SA	3.93	SA	4.5
18. learn from mistakes to improve creative outcomes.	3.83	SA	3.98	SA	3.91	SA	12.5
19. initiate original projects or activities independently.	3.93	SA	4.00	SA	3.96	SA	1
20. balance imaginative thinking with practical application.	3.82	SA	3.98	SA	3.90	SA	14
AVERAGE WEIGHTED MEAN	3.83	SA	3.98	SA	3.90	Very High	

Legend:

Numerical Scale	Verbal Description	Interpretation
3.25 – 4.00	Always (A)	Very High
2.50 – 3.24	Often (O)	High
1.75 – 2.49	Sometimes (S)	Low
1.00 – 1.74	Never (N)	Very Low

The highest-ranked creativity behavior was item 19 "initiate original projects or activities independently", with an overall weighted mean of 3.96 (Strongly Agree), ranking 1st. This indicates that learners in CAMAG's kindergarten classrooms are frequently seen coming up with their own projects and activities without needing explicit direction, which reflects a strong intrinsic drive to create and explore beyond assigned tasks. Such self-initiated creativity suggests that the learning environment supports autonomy and encourages original expression.

The lowest-ranked item was 16 "exhibit self-motivation to create or invent beyond assigned tasks", with an overall weighted mean of 3.83 (Strongly Agree), ranking 20th. Although this is still interpreted as Very High Level, its relatively lower position implies that while learners follow and complete assigned creative tasks well, the explicit habit of going beyond those requirements to invent and elaborate on their own is somewhat less noticeable compared to other creativity indicators.

The composite grand mean across all items was 3.90, interpreted as Very High Level of creativity, signaling that kindergarten learners in CAMAG's public schools are generally perceived as highly creative. The pattern is consistent with the study of Katigbak (2024) showing that play-integrated and guided-play environments nurture divergent thinking, imagination, and innovation in early childhood, supporting the view that the play-based practices in this setting effectively foster a strong, observable level of creativity among the learners.

Table 13 presents the level of motivation exhibited by kindergarten learners as perceived by teachers and parents across 15 behavioral indicators.

The most strongly endorsed motivational behavior was item 15 "take responsibility for classroom roles or jobs with enthusiasm", with an overall weighted mean of 3.96 (Strongly Agree), ranking 1st. Teachers and parents perceive the children as consistently eager to assume assigned classroom tasks and handle them with energy and commitment, indicating that the learners feel a sense of purpose and value in their roles. This willingness to take ownership suggests that the classroom context successfully nurtures responsibility and active participation, reinforcing a positive motivational stance.

On the other hand, item 1 "show enthusiasm when starting new learning activities" ranked lowest, with an overall weighted mean of 3.74 (Strongly Agree). This indicates that while learners are generally motivated overall, their initial excitement at the beginning of novel activities is somewhat less pronounced than their sustained engagement during tasks or when assuming responsibilities. The relatively lower rating on this item may reflect a need for teachers to further strengthen warm-up strategies, scaffolding, or emotional hooks to ignite immediate interest at the outset of new lessons.

The composite mean of 3.86, interpreted as Very High Level

Table 13
Level of motivation of the learners N1 = 96; N2 = 180

Indicators	Teachers		Parents		Overall		
The learners…	WM	Desc	WM	Desc	WM	Desc	Rank
1. show enthusiasm when starting new learning activities.	3.49	SA	3.99	SA	3.74	SA	15
2. eagerly participate in classroom tasks.	3.83	SA	3.94	SA	3.89	SA	4
3. persist in tasks even when challenges arise.	3.75	SA	4.00	SA	3.88	SA	6.5
4. express curiosity about new topics introduced in class.	3.77	SA	3.96	SA	3.87	SA	9
5. respond positively to praise and encouragement.	3.67	SA	3.96	SA	3.81	SA	13.5
6. take initiative to complete activities independently.	3.78	SA	3.98	SA	3.88	SA	6.5
7. enjoy choosing among different learning activities.	3.90	SA	3.94	SA	3.92	SA	3
8. take pride in their accomplishments and share them with others.	3.69	SA	3.96	SA	3.82	SA	12
9. show interest in learning beyond assigned tasks.	3.78	SA	3.97	SA	3.88	SA	6.5
10. are motivated to improve after making mistakes.	3.67	SA	3.94	SA	3.81	SA	13.5
11. actively engage during group activities and discussions.	3.94	SA	3.94	SA	3.94	SA	2
12. look forward to coming to class and learning new things.	3.70	SA	3.97	SA	3.84	SA	11
13. use feedback to guide and improve their work.	3.81	SA	3.95	SA	3.88	SA	6.5
14. show optimism when facing difficult learning tasks.	3.73	SA	3.97	SA	3.85	SA	10
15. take responsibility for classroom roles or jobs with enthusiasm.	3.94	SA	3.98	SA	3.96	SA	1
AVERAGE WEIGHTED MEAN	3.76	SA	3.96	SA	3.86	Very High	

Legend:

Numerical Scale	Verbal Description	Interpretation
3.25 – 4.00	Always (A)	Very High
2.50 – 3.24	Often (O)	High
1.75 – 2.49	Sometimes (S)	Low
1.00 – 1.74	Never (N)	Very Low

of motivation, reveals that kindergarten learners in CAMAG's public schools are largely perceived as engaged, persistent, and responsive to classroom demands. This high level of motivational manifestation is consistent with evidence that play-integrated, child-centered settings enhance young learners' intrinsic motivation, especially when they are given meaningful roles, choices, and opportunities for self-expression (Cutab & Cocamas, 2025), all of which are evident in the observed patterns in the current study.

Table 14 presents the level of social skills demonstrated by kindergarten learners as perceived by teachers and parents across 20 behavioral indicators.

The strongest area of social competence, as rated by both groups, is item 5 '"cooperate well with classmates during tasks"', which obtained an overall weighted mean of 3.95 (Strongly Agree), ranking 1st. This high rating indicates that learners in CAMAG's kindergarten classrooms are consistently seen working harmoniously with peers, sharing responsibilities, and contributing to joint activities in a collaborative manner. Such strong cooperative behavior suggests that the play-based environment effectively encourages shared goals, joint participation, and group accountability.

The lowest-ranked was item 9 '"invite others to join in play or activities"', with an overall weighted mean of 3.74 (Strongly Agree), ranking 20th. While still interpreted as Very High Level, this relatively lower position implies that although learners interact well once engaged, they may be somewhat less proactive in initiating inclusion or extending invitations to others who might be on the periphery. This suggests a potential area for targeted social-skills guidance, such as modeling inclusive invitations and reinforcing the habit of actively drawing classmates into play.

The composite mean of 3.89, interpreted as Very High Level of social skills, shows that kindergarten learners in CAMAG's public schools are generally perceived as possessing strong interpersonal competencies, including cooperation, empathy, and respectful communication. This pattern is consistent with the idea that play-integrated learning environments provide rich opportunities for children to practice sharing, turn-taking, conflict resolution, and perspective-taking (Asmara & Rulyansah, 2024), all of which are evident in the observed high levels of social competence throughout the sample.

Table 15 presents the results of the linear regression analysis conducted to determine whether the play-integrated learning approach significantly predicts kindergarten learners' creativity (N = 96). The overall regression model was statistically significant, F (1, 94) = 19.249, p < .001, indicating that the model reliably predicts learners' creativity. The coefficient of

Table 15
Regression analysis summary for Play-Integrated learning approach as predictor of kindergarten learners' Creativity n = 96

Predictor	B	Beta	t	p	Interpretation
Play-Integrated Learning Approach	0.822	0.412	4.387	<.001	Significant
Constant	0.770		1.104	0.272	

Notes: F (1, 94) =19.249, p<.001; R-square=0.170; Adjusted R-square=0.161

Table 14
Level of social skills of the learners N1 = 96; N2 = 180

Indicators	**Teachers**		**Parents**		**Overall**		
The learners…	WM	Desc	WM	Desc	WM	Desc	Rank
1. communicate their needs clearly and respectfully.	3.70	SA	4.00	SA	3.85	SA	18.5
2. listen attentively when others are speaking.	3.79	SA	3.97	SA	3.88	SA	13.5
3. take turns appropriately during group activities.	3.85	SA	4.00	SA	3.93	SA	3
4. show understanding and empathy towards others' feelings.	3.86	SA	3.99	SA	3.93	SA	3
5. cooperate well with classmates during tasks.	3.92	SA	3.99	SA	3.95	SA	1
6. express their opinions confidently without being aggressive.	3.85	SA	3.97	SA	3.91	SA	9
7. resolve conflicts calmly and fairly.	3.80	SA	3.99	SA	3.90	SA	10.5
8. share materials and resources with peers willingly.	3.91	SA	3.96	SA	3.93	SA	3
9. invite others to join in play or activities.	3.50	SA	3.99	SA	3.74	SA	20
10. follow classroom rules consistently.	3.78	SA	3.94	SA	3.86	SA	16
11. ask for help politely when needed.	3.85	SA	3.98	SA	3.92	SA	6.5
12. respond appropriately to social cues and body language.	3.84	SA	3.99	SA	3.92	SA	6.5
13. give compliments or positive feedback to others.	3.75	SA	3.97	SA	3.86	SA	16
14. accept differences and respect diverse viewpoints.	3.86	SA	3.93	SA	3.90	SA	10.5
15. maintain friendly relationships with classmates.	3.79	SA	3.93	SA	3.86	SA	16
16. apologize sincerely when they make mistakes.	3.85	SA	3.93	SA	3.89	SA	12
17. adapt their behavior according to different social situations.	3.72	SA	3.98	SA	3.85	SA	18.5
18. support classmates who are feeling left out or upset.	3.84	SA	3.92	SA	3.88	SA	13.5
19. express feelings in appropriate ways.	3.86	SA	3.98	SA	3.92	SA	6.5
20. demonstrate leadership when working in groups.	3.89	SA	3.96	SA	3.92	SA	6.5
AVERAGE WEIGHTED MEAN	3.81	SA	3.97	SA	3.89	Very High	

Legend:

Numerical Scale	Verbal Description	Interpretation
3.25 – 4.00	Always (A)	Very High
2.50 – 3.24	Often (O)	High
1.75 – 2.49	Sometimes (S)	Low
1.00 – 1.74	Never (N)	Very Low

Table 16
Regression analysis summary for Play-Integrated learning approach as predictor of kindergarten learners' Motivation n = 96

Predictor	**B**	**Beta**	**t**	**p**	**Interpretation**
Play-Integrated Learning Approach	1.353	0.531	6.080	<.001	Significant
Constant	1.269		1.532	0.129	

Notes: F (1, 94) =36.968, p<.001; R-square=0.282; Adjusted R-square=0.275

determination (R^2) was .170, suggesting that approximately 17.0% of the variance in kindergarten learners' creativity can be explained by the play-integrated learning approach. The adjusted R^2 value of .161 indicates a modest but meaningful explanatory power of the model.

The play-integrated learning approach emerged as a significant predictor of creativity, $B = 0.822$, $\beta = .412$, $t\ (94) = 4.387$, $p < .001$. This indicates that for every one-unit increase in the play-integrated learning approach, learners' creativity scores increase by 0.822 units. The positive standardized coefficient further suggests a moderate positive effect of play-integrated learning approach on creativity. The results denote that the play-integrated learning approach significantly and positively influences kindergarten learners' creativity. Specifically, the findings indicate that increased exposure to play-integrated learning activities is associated with higher levels of creativity among learners.

The study of Pardue (2020) supports this finding which examined the relationship between play-based learning and creativity in early childhood settings. The research demonstrated that guided, teacher-facilitated play significantly enhances children's divergent thinking, originality, and imaginative problem-solving, aligning well with the present result that play-integrated learning on its own accounts for a meaningful portion of the variance in kindergarten learners' creativity. The moderate but statistically significant positive β-weight in the present study mirrors their conclusion that structured yet playful experiences create conditions that nurture and elicit creative expression among young learners, thus reinforcing the view that integrating play into daily instruction is a viable strategy for strengthening creativity in CAMAG's kindergarten classrooms.

Table 17
Regression analysis summary for Play-Integrated learning approach as predictor of kindergarten learners' Social Skills n = 96

Predictor	**B**	**Beta**	**t**	**p**	**Interpretation**
Play-Integrated Learning Approach	0.929	0.474	5.219	<.001	Significant
Constant	0.318		0.480	0.633	

Notes: F (1, 94) =27.240, p<.001; R-square=0.225; Adjusted R-square=0.216

Table 16 shows a linear regression analysis that was performed to examine whether the play-integrated learning approach significantly predicts kindergarten learners' motivation (N = 96).

The results revealed that the regression model was statistically significant, $F\ (1, 94) = 36.968$, $p < .001$. The model

yielded an R^2 value of .282, indicating that 28.2% of the variance in learners' motivation is explained by the play-integrated learning approach. The adjusted R^2 of .275 confirms the robustness of the model, reflecting a moderate level of explanatory power.

The play-integrated learning approach was found to be a significant predictor, B = 1.353, β = .531, t(94) = 6.080, p < .001. This result implies that an increase of one unit in the play-integrated learning approach corresponds to an increase of 1.353 units in motivation scores. The standardized beta coefficient indicates a strong positive effect on learners' motivation. This indicates that the play-integrated learning approach has a strong and statistically significant positive influence on kindergarten learners' motivation.

The result is anchored by the study of Rickards (2025) which found that play-based learning increases children's engagement, intrinsic interest, and persistence in classroom tasks because it aligns with their natural curiosity and desire for autonomy. The result is parallel to the present finding that the play-integrated learning approach explains a substantial proportion (28.2%) of the variance in motivation, with a strong positive β-weight, underscoring that play-rich environments are powerful levers for strengthening kindergarten learners' drive and enthusiasm for learning.

Table 17 shows the results of the linear regression conducted to determine the predictive effect of the play-integrated learning approach on kindergarten learners' Social Skills (N = 96). The regression model was statistically significant, F (1, 94) = 27.240, $p < .001$, suggesting that the model provides a good fit to the data. The R^2 value of .225 indicates that 22.5% of the variance in learners' social skills is explained by the play-integrated learning approach. The adjusted R^2 of .216 further supports the model's adequacy in explaining the dependent variable.

The results showed that the play-integrated learning approach significantly predicts social skills of kindergarten learners, $B = 0.929$, β = .474, t (94) = 5.219, $p < .001$. This suggests that a one-unit increase in the play-integrated learning approach leads to a 0.929 increase in social skills scores. The standardized coefficient reflects a moderate positive relationship between the variables. This suggests that play-integrated learning approach has a statistically significant and moderately strong positive effect on the social skills of kindergarten learners.

These results are consistent with the study of Raguinduin (2020) which shows that when children engage in guided, collaborative play, they regularly practice turn-taking, sharing, conflict resolution, and perspective-taking, all of which are core components of social competence. The finding that play-integrated learning accounts for 22.5% of the variance in kindergarten learners' social skills, coupled with the moderate positive β-weight, aligns with this body of evidence and suggests that play-rich classrooms in CAMAG provide a fertile context for nurturing prosocial behavior and peer interaction.

6. Summary, Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations

This chapter presents a comprehensive summary of the study, synthesizing the key findings derived from the data analysis regarding the implementation and impact of the play-integrated learning approach on kindergarten learners' creativity, motivation, and social skills in the public elementary schools of the selected districts in CAMAG. It also offers well-founded conclusions drawn from the results, highlighting the significant relationships between the extent of play-integrated learning implementation and the learners' creative, motivational, and social outcomes. Finally, based on the insights gained, practical recommendations are proposed to guide teachers, school administrators, and policymakers in strengthening play-integrated practices and enhancing inclusive, developmentally appropriate learning experiences for kindergarten learners.

A. Summary

Play-integrated learning was an instructional framework that intentionally embedded play into daily kindergarten activities to foster holistic development in early childhood. The research examined its influence on kindergarten learners' creativity, motivation, and social skills in selected public elementary schools within the 3rd Congressional District of Bohol for S.Y. 2025–2026, with the general objective of describing how this approach was implemented in the classroom and how it related to key learner outcomes. The specific goals included profiling teacher and parent-respondents in terms of age, sex, educational attainment, teaching position, length of service, and training hours; mapping the extent of implementation of play-integrated learning across six dimensions—imagination and creativity, cognitive growth, emotional and behavioral benefits, literacy improvement, greater independence, and physical fitness; measuring the level of learners' creativity, motivation, and social skills; and analyzing whether the extent of implementation significantly predicted these outcomes. The ultimate purpose was to propose an action plan that could guide teachers, school administrators, and policymakers in strengthening play-integrated practices in early childhood classrooms.

The study was delimited to public elementary schools in the municipalities of Candijay, Alicia, Mabini, Anda, and Guindulman in the 3rd Congressional District of Bohol, focusing on 96 kindergarten teachers and 180 parents as respondents. The research covered one school year (S.Y. 2025–2026) and relied on self-reported survey data from teachers and parents, which meant that direct classroom observation and learner-administered measures were not part of the immediate scope. The study excluded substitute or probationary teachers and those with less than one year of teaching experience, as well as parents who were not directly involved in their children's schooling, to maintain a relatively uniform and experienced sample. As a non-experimental study, it was limited in its ability to establish causal relationships definitively, and

findings were contextualized within a specific district, which may have affected their generalizability to other regions.

The methodology employed a descriptive-correlational design to simultaneously describe the prevailing state of play-integrated learning implementation and examine relationships between implementation and learner outcomes. An adapted survey questionnaire structured into five parts was used: demographic profile of teachers and parents, extent of implementation of play-integrated learning across the six focal domains, learner creativity, learner motivation, and learner social skills, all measured on 4-point Likert scales. Data were collected from 96 permanent kindergarten teachers and 180 parents selected through proportional random sampling to ensure representative coverage of the target districts. Statistical treatments included frequency and percentage distributions for demographic variables, weighted mean scores to interpret the extent of implementation and the level of learners' creativity, motivation, and social skills, and inferential analyses such as Pearson's product-moment correlation and regression to assess associations and predictive effects. Ethical procedures were observed by securing approvals from the Dean of Graduate Studies, the Ethics and Review Board, and the School Division Superintendent, and by obtaining informed consent, ensuring confidentiality, and guaranteeing voluntary participation from all respondents.

B. Findings

After a thorough and systematic analysis of the data, the findings of the study revealed that:

1) Demographic Profile of the Techer Respondents

1. Age. The teacher respondents comprised a predominantly young to middle-aged workforce, with 82 teachers (85.40%) falling within the 30–40 years old bracket, indicating a relatively youthful and mid-career teaching staff in the kindergarten setting.
2. Sex. The teaching population was overwhelmingly female, with 94 teachers (97.90%) identified as female, reflecting a strong gender skew typical in early childhood education.
3. Highest Educational Attainment. The highest educational attainment showed that 63 teachers (65.60%) had earned units in a Master's degree, highlighting a well-educated and professionally advancing faculty.
4. Teaching Position. The teachers; teaching positions were concentrated at mid-to-senior levels, with 47 Teacher IIIs (49.00%) representing the largest group, suggesting a stable and experienced teaching force.
5. Length of service. The data indicated that 53 teachers (55.20%) had 5–10 years of experience, pointing to a core of mid-tenured professionals grounded in classroom practice.
6. Number of Hours of Relevant Training. A substantial portion of teachers, 33 (34.40%), had more than 120 hours of relevant training, indicating considerable investment in continuing professional development.

2) Parent Respondents

1. Age. The parent respondents were predominantly young, with 111 parents (61.70%) below 30 years old, indicating an early-stage parenting cohort actively engaged in kindergarten education.
2. Sex. All 180 parent respondents (100.00%) were female, highlighting a mother-centered pattern of family–school participation in the setting.
3. Highest Educational Attainment. The data were overwhelmingly at the tertiary level, with 141 parents (78.30%) holding a Baccalaureate's Degree, reflecting a highly educated parental base supportive of school-based initiatives.

3) Extent of Implementation of Play-Integrated Learning Approach in the Classroom

1. Imagination and Creativity. It was perceived as Very High extent of implementation with an average weighted mean = 3.70.
2. Cognitive Growth. It was perceived as Very High extent of implementation with an average weighted mean = 3.74
3. Emotional and Behavioral Benefits. It was perceived as Very High extent of implementation in fostering emotional and behavioral benefits with an average weighted mean = 3.80
4. Literacy Improvement. It was perceived as Very High extent of implementation with an average weighted mean = 3.90
5. Greater Independence. It was perceived as Very High extent of implementation with an average weighted mean = 3.84.
6. Physical Fitness. It was perceived as Very High extent of implementation with an average weighted mean = 3.89.

4) Respondents' Perception on the Level of Creativity of the Learners. The kindergarten learners were perceived to possess a Very High level of creativity (average weighted mean), with the strongest agreement on their ability to independently initiate original projects and activities, while the comparatively lower emphasis was on explicitly demonstrating self-motivation to invent or expand beyond given creative tasks.

5) Respondents' Perception on the Level of Motivation of the Learners. The kindergarten learners were perceived to exhibit a Very High level of motivation (average weighted mean = 3.86), with the strongest agreement on their enthusiasm for taking responsibility in classroom roles and tasks, while the comparatively lower emphasis was on showing immediate excitement at the beginning of new learning activities.

6) Respondents' Perception on the Level of Social Skills of the Learners. Kindergarten learners were perceived to demonstrate a Very High Level of social skills (average weighted mean = 3.89), with the strongest agreement on

their ability to cooperate well with classmates during tasks, while the comparatively lower emphasis was on actively initiating inclusion by inviting others to join in play or activities.

7) Regression Analysis Summary for Play-Integrated Learning Approach as Predictor of Kindergarten Learners' Creativity. The play-integrated learning approach had a statistically significant and positive predictive effect on kindergarten learners' creativity.
8) Regression Analysis Summary for Play-Integrated Learning Approach as Predictor of Kindergarten Learners' Motivation. The play-integrated learning approach had a statistically significant and strong positive predictive effect on kindergarten learners' motivation.
9) Regression Analysis Summary for Play-Integrated Learning Approach as Predictor of Kindergarten Learners' Social Skills. The play-integrated learning approach had a statistically significant and moderately strong positive predictive effect on kindergarten learners' social skills.

C. *Conclusions*

Based on the findings drawn in the study, the following conclusions were derived:

The study demonstrates that play-integrated learning in public elementary schools of the 3rd Congressional District of Bohol significantly enhances kindergarten learners' creativity, motivation, and social skills, confirming that this approach positively influences the very learner outcomes it set out to examine. The regression results show a positive effects of play-integrated learning on all three domains, indicating that strengthening and systematizing this approach can directly improve key developmental outcomes in early childhood education.

D. *Recommendations*

In view of the aforementioned findings and conclusions drawn, the researcher has developed the following recommendations:

1. The DepEd Division Office (CID/ESD/PEPT Office) may update and disseminate guidelines and performance standards that explicitly recognize play-integrated learning as a key strategy for nurturing creativity, motivation, and social skills in kindergarten, aligning these with the Kindergarten Curriculum Guide.
2. The Curriculum Development Team (DepEd Division CDT) may revise or enrich the kindergarten curriculum and teachers' guides to include explicit, inquiry-oriented play modules that connect literacy and numeracy tasks with critical thinking, real-life experiences, and social-emotional learning while ensuring that learning materials support independence and cooperative play.
3. School heads may institutionalize play-integrated learning in kindergarten instruction by providing regular training, model lesson plans, and classroom observation tools focused on imagination, cognitive scaffolding, emotional regulation, and inclusive social interaction.
4. Kindergarten teachers should design structured play-based activities that integrate imagination, connect to real-life routines, and develop higher-order literacy and cognitive skills while promoting choice, ownership, and joyful engagement.

7. Proposed Action Plan

A. *Rationale*

Republic Act No. 10157 (Kindergarten Education Act) establishes a legal mandate for free, compulsory, and developmentally appropriate kindergarten education for all five-year-old Filipino children, emphasizing play-based, child-centered learning that supports cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development. The Act requires the Department of Education to provide a structured kindergarten curriculum, qualified teachers, and age-appropriate learning environments, and to ensure that early childhood education lays a strong foundation for lifelong learning and holistic growth. Despite this legal framework, many public schools continue to face challenges in consistently implementing play-integrated learning, including limited training on how to align play with specific learning outcomes, insufficient time and materials for play-based activities, and uneven application of structured yet flexible classroom practices.

Based on the context of this study, play-integrated learning approach is implemented at a Very High level across imagination and creativity, cognitive growth, emotional and behavioral benefits, literacy improvement, greater independence, and physical fitness, and that it has a statistically significant positive effect on kindergarten learners' creativity, motivation, and social skills. At the same time, the results indicate that certain aspects—such as explicitly linking play to real-life experiences, developing higher-order thinking and motor skills, and guiding children in self-monitoring and inclusive social behaviors—remain relatively less emphasized. The main purpose of the proposed action plan is to operationalize the spirit of RA 10157 by strengthening these underdeveloped components, enhancing teacher capacity in play-integrated learning, ensuring adequate learning resources and supportive classroom structures, and fostering a collaborative, school–home–community approach to early childhood education. By aligning practice with the law and the study's findings, the action plan aims to enrich the quality and inclusiveness of kindergarten education in public schools, particularly for learners with diverse needs and backgrounds, and to ensure that kindergartens truly become nurturing spaces anchored on play, exploration, and holistic development.

B. Program Description

The proposed program focuses on strengthening the implementation of the play-integrated learning approach in kindergarten by addressing specific areas identified as less emphasized in current practice. While teachers already use play to support imagination, cognition, emotions, literacy, independence, and physical fitness, the program aims to enhance the planning and execution of structured outdoor play, the design of activities explicitly linked to real-life routines, and the intentional development of higher-order thinking, motor skills, and social-emotional competencies. It seeks to clarify and refine the use of play-based grouping strategies, create more carefully planned outdoor learning stations, and systematically integrate activities that promote self-monitoring, inclusion, and cooperative interaction. By targeting these underutilized components, the program intends to provide a more comprehensive, cohesive, and child-centered learning environment that fully supports the varied developmental needs of kindergarten learners.

1) Planning Stage

Assess the unique developmental profiles, strengths, and needs of kindergarten learners through classroom observations, developmental checklists, and family input, then design play-integrated lesson plans that include structured outdoor activities, clearly defined learning objectives, and varied groupings tailored to children's distinctiveness.

2) Implementation Stage

Apply the play-integrated learning approach in the classroom by using flexible and intentional groupings, incorporating carefully planned outdoor and indoor play stations, and adapting teaching methods and materials to address learners' cognitive, motor, emotional, and social needs.

3) Evaluation Stage

Continuously monitor learners' progress through formative assessments, anecdotal records, and portfolio reviews, evaluating the effectiveness of play-integrated strategies in improving creativity, motivation, and social skills, with particular attention to areas previously less emphasized such as real-life connections, higher-order thinking, and motor development.

4) Monitoring Stage

Provide ongoing support, supervision, and peer collaboration opportunities for teachers to ensure consistent implementation of play-integrated learning, regularly review emerging challenges, and make data-informed adjustments to instructional practices and classroom environments.

5) Program Objectives

This program aims to deepen and refine the implementation of the play-integrated learning approach that supports the holistic development of kindergarten learners, with particular emphasis on outdoor play, real-life application, higher-order thinking, motor skills, and inclusive social interaction. Specifically, this proposed action plan aims to:

1. Develop and integrate clear criteria for designing play-integrated activities aligned with learners' developmental levels and distinctiveness.
2. Design and implement varied outdoor learning experiences that connect play to real-life routines, motor development, and social-emotional learning.
3. Establish differentiated learning expectations and indicators of progress that reflect the diverse capabilities of kindergarten learners.
4. Incorporate flexible and intentional grouping strategies, including both homogenous and heterogeneous groupings, to enhance peer learning and individualized support.
5. Introduce structured competitive and collaborative play activities that are adapted to learners' abilities and developmental needs.
6. Provide ongoing professional development and peer support for teachers to effectively plan, implement, and evaluate play-integrated learning in kindergarten.

C. Mechanics of Implementation

Upon approval from the members of the examining tribunal, the researcher will coordinate a presentation to the Public Schools District Supervisor in the 3rd Congressional District of Bohol to discuss the purpose, design, and operational details of this proposed action plan. This meeting aims to foster collaboration and encourage active participation from school heads and kindergarten teachers, and the researcher welcomes suggestions and recommendations to improve the program's relevance and feasibility.

D. Schedule of Implementation

The action plan is designed to be implemented starting June 2026 and to conclude in April 2028, encompassing a series of phased activities across the school year. After each phase, a thorough assessment and review will be conducted to monitor progress and address emerging concerns. This evaluation is intended to serve as a roadmap for refining the program, and by responding to monitoring findings, the action plan can evolve and improve in quality and impact over time.

E. Monitoring and Evaluation System

A monitoring and evaluation tool will be developed to measure the outcomes of the proposed action plan, focusing on the extent of play-integrated learning implementation, changes in learners' creativity, motivation, and social skills, and the quality of outdoor and group-based activities. Regular assessments will be conducted through classroom observations, teacher reflection reports, and periodic parent feedback, with the results used to identify areas for improvement and to continuously strengthen kindergarten instruction and learning environments.

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